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CHEVY CHASE ☞ CLIFTON ☞ LEESBURG

A publication of the Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States, Inc.



Measuring Springtime

page 4

By Julie Dunlap

The Audubon Naturalist Society inspires residents of the greater Washington, DC, region to appreciate, understand, and protect their natural environment through outdoor experiences, education, and advocacy.

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Woodend, a 40-acre wildlife sanctuary in Chevy Chase, MD

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COVER Photo of a red knot, *Calidris canutus*, taken by Jan van de Kam from Public Library of Science Journal and obtained from Wikimedia Commons. Red knots fly more than 9,000 miles from south to north every spring and repeat the trip in reverse every autumn. Surveys during spring migration indicate a serious population decline.



ANS earned the Standards for Excellence® Certification from Maryland Nonprofits' Ethics and Accountability Program.

ANS was selected by the **Chronicle for Philanthropy** as one of the best non-profits in the region, so you can be certain that your support will have a local impact.



The State of the Birds

In recent decades, birders in the Washington region have seen changes in avian populations. Some species have shown strong population increases in the metropolitan area, while others troubling declines. This is especially evident to ANS members who participate in breeding bird surveys and annual Christmas counts.

Each year, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, an effort of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state wildlife agencies, and nongovernmental organizations, produces *The State of the Birds*. (A link can be found at www.ANShome.org.) The report answers the central question: How are American birds faring? And the answers in the 2009 report, while not surprising, should serve as (another) wake-up call. Bird populations are declining where bird habitat is declining. And when people—government officials, birders, hunters, advocacy group members, private landowners—coordinate their conservation efforts, birds benefit. Species in point: peregrine falcons, bald eagles, and ospreys.

ANS member Napier Shelton grew up in DC, where he's been watching birds—mostly in Glover Archbold Park and along the C&O Canal National Historical Park—for 70 years. In a 1957 article he wrote for *The Atlantic Naturalist*, Napier recounts seeing 23 species of warblers one May morning in 1956 in Glover Archbold Park.

"On a good day during migration, I used to see waves of warblers," said Napier in a recent interview. "I don't see them anymore, but I'm happy to report seeing eight active bald eagle nests between Georgetown and Harper's Ferry along the Potomac River. That's a large improvement from the days when DDT contamination caused significant population declines."

Longtime ANS member John Bjerke understands the gains and losses in our area. John leads birding trips for ANS, serves as a Christmas Count leader, and has monitored species for the MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project. (You can read a profile of John on page 14.)

"Edge species and suburban birds that adapt quickly to living near humans have done very well," said John. This includes American robins, Carolina wrens, and Northern cardinals.

Grassland species, on the other hand, have fared poorly. "Bobwhite quail are gone, Eastern meadowlarks are scarce, and grasshopper sparrows and field sparrows that require undisturbed meadow and field habitats are in decline," said John. "But the situation would be far worse without Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve."

John leads ANS birding trips to the Atlantic coast each year. "Red knots have suffered catastrophic losses," he said. "They and other shorebirds breed in the far north, migrate long distances, and rest and feed in the central Atlantic states. But more and more, these staging areas are under threat. I consider shorebirds to be more vulnerable than even neo-tropical migrants."

According to *The State of the Birds 2009*, wildlife watching generates \$122 billion each year. One in four American adults, it claims, identifies as a birdwatcher. But those numbers will decline as well unless they can be harnessed to fight what many consider the greatest threat to birds—habitat loss. The 2010 report takes aim at climate change, which compounds threats to birds and, according to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, could "push many species towards extinction."

Everyone awake now?

Neal

Saving Streams One Pair of Eyes at a Time

To Editor,

Thank you so much for publishing the wonderful article "To Revive Urban Streams, Think Small." It was a huge eye-opener for me! Although I live in the Cabin John area, I had no clue about the state of this essential watershed—until I read Dan's (Kupinski) outstanding article! By comparing the role of small streams in a watershed to arteries in a human heart made the issue come alive for me. Not only is a great deal of factual information covered, but some important and useful suggestions are offered about what each of us can do to help mitigate stormwater runoff! Inspired by this article, a group of us at Bethesda Green are planning a rain garden project this spring!

Susan Belchamber
Bethesda, MD

Chatter over Cell Phones

To Editor,

I am a long-time member of ANS, occasional volunteer, and professional physicist. I support ANS to do science-based environmental protection and advocacy. I was disappointed, however, to see the tip in October's eNEWS regarding cell phones. Cell phones certainly pose a number of hazards: distracted driving, improper disposal, and improper use leading to hearing damage, which is the largest concern I would have regarding children! There is, however, no scientific basis for damage due to the radio waves from cell phones. Of course, it sounds much scarier to call this radiation (which it is), but heat from your radiator is also radiation. Exactly the same, just a different frequency! The radio waves from cell phones are at frequencies too low to cause the type of ionizing damage that can lead to cancer. Numerous studies have been conducted on this topic, and no ill impacts have been replicated. (See www.cancer.org and search for "Cell Phones.")

I appreciate the news and information that ANS distributes. Promulgating the technical equivalent of urban myths, however, distracts from the many real issues we face.

Steve Smith
Takoma Park, MD

Editor's Note: According to cancer.org, studies so far have focused on adults, not children. And possible health effects "might be more pronounced in children because their nervous systems are still developing and their lifetime exposure will be greater than adults, who started at a later age." The same site quotes the National Cancer Institute's position: "Although research has not consistently demonstrated a link between cellular telephone use and cancer, scientists still caution that further surveillance is needed before conclusions can be drawn." Sounds like there's a scientific basis for caution.

Following the Voice of the Naturalist

To ANS,

I went to see the rusty blackbirds at Bull Run Regional Park on March 1 and was surprised to find about 300 birds! The vocal flock was mostly rusties, with a few common grackles mixed in. Also, it was nice to see at least three red-headed woodpeckers. Thanks for listing the info on the hotline. It's essential for visiting birders like me.

Bernard Foy
Santa Fe, NM

STAFF UPDATE A big ANS welcome to **Caroline Graham**, who while retired from National Institutes of Health, has sharpened her pencil and is working part-time in our finance department. Another welcome face in finance belongs to **Antonia Miller**, a part-time accountant, who comes to us from a local environmental restoration firm.

Measuring Springtime

By Julie Dunlap

Cherry blossoms signal the end of winter to most Washingtonians, and television beams the news to the wider world. But spring arrives earlier at Woodend, where a cacophony of quacking draws staff members out of their torpor and onto the lawn in early March. After two or three warm days in a row, especially following a rain, says Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason, “Someone will say, ‘What’s that clatter?’” The din, she knows, comes from wood frogs, whose annual mating chorus is as brief as it is loud. Lasting as few as 48 hours, the ephemeral event is a steadfast herald of warmer days to come. “It’s a wonderful wake-up call,” says Mason.

Our survival once depended on attunement to the seasons as fine as Mason’s. Close observation taught Native Americans to set fishing nets when the shadbush bloomed and to plant corn when elm leaves grew as large as squirrel ears. The first known records correlating animal life cycles with seasonal changes came from the Chinese. Over 2,000 years ago, their scroll

calendars of spring insect emergence were avant-garde tools for agricultural pest management.

It took literary naturalists to record the poetry in these annual rhythms. In an 1852 journal entry, Henry Thoreau wrote, “How sweet is the perception of a new natural fact!” Passion for facts about bird migration and flower blooming might carry him 30 miles afield in a day, cramming notebooks with scribbles and a straw hat with plant specimens. In 1930s Wisconsin, Aldo Leopold began to document and reflect on snowy skunk tracks, woodcock sky dances, prairie flower birthdays, and other “datable events in that cycle of beginnings and ceasings which we call a year.” And in 1945’s war-worn Washington, a young State Department official observed “the perennial process of budding and leafing” along the Potomac and translated it into the nature classic, *Spring in Washington*. “The discovery of spring each year,” wrote Louis Halle, “is like a rediscovery of the universe.”

Quantifying such discoveries is the task of phenology. From the Greek word *phaino*, meaning to show or to appear, phenology is literally the science of appearing. Budburst, fruit ripening, leaf fall, insect hatches, bird nesting and migration, frog choruses, and bat hibernation are all biological stages, called phenophases, of interest to phenologists.

Many environmental factors—day length, snowmelt, wind—can impact phenophase timing, but much research now focuses on temperature and other aspects of climate change. The physical consequences of global warming can be remote and confusing, notes Mason, including “more extreme temperature fluctuations, more extreme droughts, heavier storms and floods.” But alterations in the living realm, especially a pattern of off-schedule frog songs and other backyard events, can make climate change manifest.

As they strive to measure these shifts, phenologists no longer look to budding and leafing, as Halle did, for evidence of nature’s “immutable order.” Around Walden Pond, highbush blueberry now blooms three weeks earlier than in Thoreau’s springs, and at Leopold’s sand county farm, tufted titmice have pushed their range north since the 1940s. Confirming such long-term changes depends on the availability of Thoreau’s, Leopold’s, and other old accounts.

Probably the most extensive collection of historic avian data occupies 40 five-foot tall

filing cabinets at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Beltsville. Now part of the North American Bird Phenology Program (NABPP) coordinated by the U.S. Geological Survey, the cabinets house six million 2- x 5-inch cards dating as far back as 1880. “Back in the day,” says Patuxent Biologist Sam Droege, “this was the biggest database about birds in North America.” Ornithologists as eminent as Theodore Roosevelt and Alexander Skutch mailed the government missives on about 900 species, great auks and Carolina parakeets included. Once the epic task of digitizing the cards is complete, the records can be compared with results from satellite tracking and other modern study techniques. “What that data set allows us to do,” says Droege, “is look back in time. ... We can use this as part of a natural thermometer of change.”

Already bearing fruit is a four-decade study of bloom times around DC led by Dr. Stan Shetler, former ANS board member and Curator Emeritus of the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. “We didn’t set out to prove anything,” says Shetler, “as far as global warming is concerned.” But informal lists of a few volunteers in 1970 accumulated into organized records for over 600 plant species. Analysis in 2000 revealed that 76 of 100 selected species showed significant advances in first-flowering dates. The plants’ average 4.5-day advance correlated strongly with a 1.2°C local temperature rise over the



Courtesy of Fish & Wildlife Service

The range of the non-migratory tufted titmouse, left, has pushed north since the 1940s. Changes in the world of flora include the bloom time of Dutchman’s breeches, right, which has accelerated by 3.2 days over the past 30 years, according to a local study.



A few of the 40 five-foot tall filing cabinets at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Beltsville, MD, that house six million cards of bird data, some going back to 1880.

same 30 years. “It seemed remarkable,” says Shetler.

Shetler notes that plant species may differ widely in their responses to temperature shifts. False strawberry, for example, advanced its bloom date by 46 days in 30 years, while Dutchman’s breeches accelerated by 3.2 days, and a few species bloomed later. Such contrasting sensitivities to climate change could have major ecological significance. Already, warmer, shorter winters are weakening sugar maples, increasing their vulnerability to Asian longhorn beetles, and may lead to their extirpation. In contrast, Shetler says, warming seems to favor dandelions and other exotics. He speculates that milder winters could give an additional advantage to invasives over native plants, potentially leading to fundamental changes in local ecosystems. If trends continue, says Shetler, “habitat that once was suitable for species no longer will be.”

Such evidence of jump-started springs concerns allergy sufferers, farmers, and the DC tourism industry, which absorbs losses from failed bloom date predictions for the city’s iconic cherries. Particularly troubling, says hummingbird bander Bill Hilton Jr., is the potential impact on interdependent organisms that respond to different environmental cues. Hatching of ruby-throated hummingbirds coincides with first blooms of their major nectar

source, trumpet creeper. If environmental factors delay blooming but not migration, says Hilton, nesting birds may not find enough food to raise young. The vines have other pollinators, he adds, but without well-timed trumpet creeper blooms, ruby throats would dwindle.

Rare species can be acutely susceptible to such disconnections. Red knots power their spring journeys from Argentina to the Arctic by feasting on horseshoe crab eggs around Delaware Bay. Regulated by unknown factors, 100,000 knots once arrived reliably around May 20th, matching the bounteous peak of crab nesting. But in the past 20 years, flocks have shrunk 80 percent, with bay stopovers often belated by a week or more. Crab nesting, believed to depend on water temperature and lunar phases, has stayed roughly on schedule, but reduced crab numbers from decades of overharvesting has resulted in shorter, less prolific mating seasons. Red knots that arrive too late cannot build fat reserves essential to reaching their nesting grounds and raising chicks. At current rates of decline, the birds may face extinction within a decade.

Consequences of timing disruptions could cascade through ecosystems. If tree leaves unfold late along the C&O Canal, caterpillars that feed on them may die out, destroying a prime food source

Of Buds and Blackpolls

Just as Thoreau dubbed himself a “self-appointed inspector of snow-storms and rain-storms,” Louis Halle claimed the title, self-appointed monitor of spring. Born a century ago, the future international scholar was a State Department expert on inter-American relations when he began a journal on January 22, 1945. Colleagues teased that his forays to Rock Creek Park, Dyke Marsh, and the C&O Canal, especially during World War II, were escapes from reality. Their perspective aggrieved Halle, who wrote, “It is curious how the preoccupations of the hive fill us, driving out all memory of the universe into which we were born.”

Part of his mission, as Halle biked ten miles a morning before entering the hive, was to redefine the season. “The mathematicians reckon that spring begins March 21, but the mathematicians are a month behind the season the year round.” Halle’s spring debuts in late January with a cardinal’s first cue-cue-cue of courtship in a leafless tree and departs only when the last blackpoll warbler heads north in June. Everywhere and every day, he found reasons to rhapsodize about his discoveries. “To snatch the passing moment and examine it for signs of eternity is the noblest of occupations.”

Halle’s passion for nature and wayfaring spirit led him to join ANS, then known as the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia. Roger Tory Peterson became his birding mentor, and one morning in 1947, Rachel Carson spotted the pair along the Canal. Her friend, Shirley Briggs, later wrote that Rachel “mustered her courage” to meet the author of *Spring in Washington*, a book she deeply admired.

In 1956, scholarly endeavors took Halle to Geneva, where he taught at the Graduate Institute of International Studies. His 22 books on international policy, the Cold War, and nature observations include the Burroughs Medal-winning *Birds Against Men*. But it is *Spring in Washington* that has brought Halle perennial acclaim. Colman McCarthy ranks it with *Walden*, writing, “Both works, accountings of minds that drifted loose from the praters and posings of the conventional, are explorations of the natural world that led beyond woodlands and wildlife to the discovery of self.”—Julie Dunlap

Measuring Springtime

continued from page 5

for migrating warblers, birds that Halle calls “the principal glory of North American spring.” Organisms within an ecological community have co-evolved, points out biologist Droege. We lack hard numbers, he says, to understand how plants and animals maintain the synchrony we all depend on. “We have weather data, temperature data,” says Droege, yet know so little about how weather and temperature variations could affect plants, wildlife, and, ultimately, humans. “We’re in this uncharted area.”

Ecologists are determined to untangle the Gordian knot of phenological relationships before the connections are severed. Their urgency is reflected in efforts to mine historic archives, such as the NABPP files, international resources, and personal journals.

Instead, researchers are capitalizing on the Internet to create vast networks of citizen climate scientists. The National Phenology Network sponsors an online public investigation of wildflowers, grasses, trees, and shrubs, called Project Budburst, and anticipates releasing an equivalent wildlife effort later this year. Budding phenologists with narrower interests may prefer species-specific undertakings, such as the Great Sunflower Project, Monarch Watch, or HoneyBeeNet. Other initiatives, notably Journey North and Operation Ruby-Throat, welcome participants as young as kindergarteners. The basic requirements for getting involved, says Droege, are “a love for nature and a concern that things need to be measured.”

More than 1,600 volunteers are already contributing to the NABPP. Office workers scan hand-written cards,

posting them online for others to transcribe. Volunteer transcriber Isabelle Doucet of Greenbelt loves the flexibility. “You can be at your desk and do it at lunchtime,” she says. An Information Technologist at Montgomery College, Doucet also appreciates that the technology has brought together a diverse group. “Young, old, retired, working in countries around the world,” she says. “You feel part of a community..and I want to be part of the solution of helping our wildlife.”

To Stephanie Mason, the greatest benefit of contributing to phenology projects may be increased awareness. Mason leads nature walks throughout the year, faithfully pointing out the first bluets of spring and the last katydids of autumn. Once her students kneel down to examine a blossom closely, she says, they begin to see connections between the individual plant, its pollinators, and the larger system. “As people better understand the way things work, they become more observant and more concerned about what’s happening in their region and their world,” says Mason. Or as Louis Halle writes, “If I could learn just when spring arrived, in what manner and in what guises, I should have grown in knowledge of reality and established a bond of common experience with my fellow travelers in eternity.”

Julie Dunlap writes about environmental history for several publications. Her cover story “Field Marks of a Celebration: Roger Tory Peterson’s Centennial Birthday” appeared in the August/September 2008 issue of the Audubon Naturalist News.

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This ANS service offers weekly reports of sightings of rare or notable birds. Call 301-652-1088 (Mobile/PDA Ready) or visit AudubonNaturalist.org.

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Diane Cameron

Cathy Wiss, coordinator of the ANS Water Quality Monitoring Program, helps volunteers monitor Ten Mile Creek, considered one of the cleanest waterways in Montgomery County.

Keeping Ten Mile Creek Clean Write Your Own Letter or Use Ours

Dear _____,

Ten Mile Creek is one of the most pristine waterways in Montgomery County. Trout and many other fish and other wildlife live there. As it is part of the Little Seneca Reservoir, we depend upon Ten Mile Creek in times of drought for clean drinking water.

As you know, Ten Mile Creek runs just outside the town of Clarksburg and the health of the creek is threatened by the "Stage IV" development plans for Clarksburg. This plan includes more than 1,600 residential units and a bus depot with 22 acres of pavement. If allowed, this level of development would result in permanent degradation of water quality and loss of biodiversity.

I urge you to use your office to protect this clean waterway and drinking water resource by 1) moving the bus depot to another, already-urbanized area, and 2) asking the Planning Board to revise the Clarksburg Master Plan. If developers aren't held to greater land cover requirements and caps on impervious surfaces, Ten Mile Creek will inevitably decline.

Please reduce the size of this development, protect forests and fields, and choose clean water. Thank you.

Your Signature

Send your letter to:

County Executive Isiah Leggett: 240-777-2500,
ocemail@montgomerycountymd.gov

Council President Nancy Floreen: 240-777-7959,
councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov

All other County Council members: 240-777-7900,
county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov,

The Storm Over Stormwater

In 2007, the Maryland General Assembly overwhelmingly passed the Stormwater Management Act. Afterward, the State Department of the Environment set up nearly three years of public meetings, many of which I attended and testified at, to hammer out the details. The result was a progressive piece of legislation that set out to do what had to be done: Reduce the polluted runoff flowing into our streams and rivers, and eventually the Chesapeake Bay.

The law, mandating that all development projects incorporate meadows, trees, green roofs, or other means to absorb and lessen the onslaught of stormwater, was set to go in effect in May of this year. Now, as the *NEWS* goes to press, I regret reporting that building and construction interests and their municipal allies are working to weaken the law and may possibly allow developers to meet lesser standards, or to simply opt out.

This means that development sites will have to be retrofitted later for improved controls—at up to five times the cost, with the public, rather than the builder, picking up the tab.

And so, this is where we are: The Stormwater Act of 2007, drafted and vetted in a publicly-transparent process, is being pushed aside for ninth-inning proposals to weaken protections. Looks like clean water may get the shaft this spring in Annapolis. Stay tuned via eNEWS. —*Diane Cameron, ANS Conservation Program Director*

Contact House Environmental Matters Chair Maggie McIntosh and let her know that you oppose any weakening of laws protecting clean water in MD.

MAGGIE McINTOSH, Democrat, District 43
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
maggie.mcintosh@house.state.md.us | 410-841-3990

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WASHINGTONIAN AWARD WINNER

GreenSquare @ Nature Fair

At least 20 green local for-profits and non-profits will be featured at this year's Nature Fair, scheduled **Sunday, May 2, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.** At GreenSquare, fair-goers will find groups (besides ANS!), working on issues they care about. They'll also learn about eco-responsible goods and services. Bethesda Green and Clean Currents are just two of the participants. For the complete list, go to www.ANShome.org/SpecialEvents/NatureFair.

Children's Nature Book Club Launched at Rust Sanctuary

By Bruce McGranahan, Rust Sanctuary Director

Rust Sanctuary has started a Children's Nature Book Club, or CNBC for short. CNBC was the brain child of three Rust volunteers—Ann Garvey, Rosaria Butterfield and Ellie Daley—all of which saw the need to engage pre-school age children in nature reading, crafts, and hands-on exploration. The success of this program also lies in the fact that mother's say there is a shortage of activities geared to this age group.

Research has shown that contact with nature improves a child's physical, cognitive and emotional development. The "no child left inside" movement was spawned largely by Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods*. Louv and others argue that re-connecting children with nature benefits children and is imperative for teaching a new generation to value nature and a healthy environment. If we never develop an understanding and appreciation of nature in childhood, how can we be expected to be good stewards of the Earth?

Children have a natural sense of wonder and are easily enriched by the diversity of life that abounds in the outdoors. The CNBC hopes to engage minds in a way that will lead to a life long love of nature and expose children and young families to Rust Sanctuary. "I really think that this kind of program will serve stay-at-home parents so very well. I'm looking forward to sharing the great treasure that Rust is to many others" says Rosaria Butterfield, who helps plan the weekly program and attends with her own children.

The book club is open to 3 and 4 year olds children. Each session includes reading a nature-themed book followed by an activity that correlates with the book. The sessions are free to ANS members and \$3 for non-members. CNBC meets the first Saturday of each month followed by Friday mornings for the rest of the month. For more information or to sign up you may contact: Bruce McGranahan at 703-669-2561 or bruce@audubonnaturalist.org.



Children and parents attending the new Nature Book Club at Rust Sanctuary read books and make crafts and friends.

Volunteer at Rust Manor House & Sanctuary

ANS seeks volunteers for our 68-acre Sanctuary in Leesburg, VA. Opportunities include assisting with habitat restoration, interpretive walks, tours of manor house, installation of bird boxes, event planning, and more. If interested, please contact Ann Garvey at ahgarvey@aol.com or 540-882-4405.

A Worrisome Wrap-Up of Virginia's General Assembly

This session's spotlight was on Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Bills. One (HB533/SB112), supported by the environmental community, created a sensible process for natural gas utilities to replace aging infrastructure. Others did not pass environmental muster.

- SB128/HB1300 allows power plants to trade and buy pollution credits (rather than reduce pollution).
- HB 92 reverses a Virginia ruling that prohibited energy utilities from marketing and selling energy credits as Green Power.
- HB787 added the goal of offshore drilling for oil to the existing policy of offshore drilling for natural gas
- HB 756 requires that 70% of revenues and royalties paid to the Commonwealth as a result of offshore natural gas and oil drilling go to the Transportation Trust Fund, with only 20% to the Virginia Coastal Energy Research Consortium and 10% to localities for improvements to infrastructure and transportation.
- HB1220 delays implementation of new and stricter stormwater regulations until December 1, 2011.

The environment will benefit from these actions:

- The defeat of HB277, which called for a Western Bypass Corridor.
- The defeat of SB181/HB1395, which would have given grants to private road developers from public tax monies.
- The passing of HB1135, which requires that "new" or additional nitrogen and phosphorus discharges made by small sewage treatment plants after January 2011 will require offsets.—*Stella Koch, ANS Virginia Conservation Associate*

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NATURALIST CALENDAR

For registration form and complete information, see our environmental education catalog, Nature Activities for All Ages, at audubon-naturalist.org. Children/Family classes: 301-652-9188 x26; Adult classes: x16; walk-in registration Monday-Friday 9 am-4 pm. Check ANShome.org regularly for cancellations and other updates. From Homepage, go to "Nature Activities & Education."



FAMILY PROGRAMS

Billy Goat Trail (ages 8 & up w/ adult) Sat., April 10 (10 am-noon) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Spring Peepers (ages 4 & up w/ adult) Sat., April 10 (7-8:30 pm) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Wiggly Worms (ages 3-7 w/ adult) Sat., May 15 (10-11 am) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Frisbee Golf (ages 8 & up w/ adult) Sat., May 22 (10 am-12 pm) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Lil' Sprouts: Animal Babies (ages 18 months-3 years w/ adult) Fridays (10-11 am) A: April 9; B: April 23; C: May 7; D: May 21; E: June 4; F: June 18; one program members \$12; nonmembers \$14; two programs \$22/\$26; three programs \$30/\$36

Once a Pond a Time (ages 3-7 w/adult) Sat., June 12 (10-11 am) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Kayaking Excursion (ages 8 & up w/ adult) Sat., June 19 (10 am-12 pm) members \$40; nonmembers \$45

Twilight Trek (ages 4 & up w/ adult) Sat., July 31 (7:30-8:30 pm) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

Summer Storms (ages 4 & up w/adult) Sat., Aug. 14. (10-11 am) members \$12; nonmembers \$14

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Animal Tales (ages 3 ½-5) Mondays, April 19-May 24 (1-2:30 pm) members \$84; nonmembers \$102

Wonders of Woodend (K) Wednesdays, April 7-May 12 (4-5:30 pm) members \$84; nonmembers \$102

Forest Eco Explorers (1st-2nd grade) Tuesdays, April 20-May 25 (4-5:30 pm) members \$84; nonmembers \$102

The Great Archeological Dig (3rd-4th grade) Mondays, Apr. 26-May 24 (4-5:30 pm) members \$70; nonmembers \$80

Wildlife Survival (5th-6th grade) Thursdays, Apr. 15-May 20 (4-5:30 pm) members \$110; nonmembers \$125

ADULT PROGRAMS

Visit ANShome.org for program prices.

Spring Saunters Along the Canal Wednesdays (10 am-12:30 pm) B: April 14; C: April 28; D: May 12; E: May 26

Early Spring Wildflowers Sat., April 3 (9 am-3 pm)

Introduction to Wildflower ID Thurs., April 8 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sat., April 10 (full-day field trip)

A Year at Boundary Bridge Saturdays (9 am-2 pm) B: April 10; C: Jun. 12; D: Nov. 6

Spring Peepers Sun., April 11 (7-9 pm)

Geology of Great Falls, VA Sat., April 17 (9 am-2 pm)

River Herring Return to Rock Creek Sat., April 17 (9 am-1 pm) free

Evening on the Canal Sat., April 17 (7-9 pm)

Hawks Aloft at Fort Smallwood Park Sat., April 17 (9 am-4 pm)

Spring Early Birds (7-10 am) A: Sat., April 17; B: Sun., April 25; C: Sat., May 1; D: Sun., May 9; E: Sat., May 15

A Spring Morning Along the River Sun., April 18 (7:30 am-12 pm)

Botanical Gems of Montgomery County: Rachel Carson Park Sun., April 18 (1-4:30 pm)

Friday Escapes (10 am-1:30 pm) A: Cabin John Park, April 23; B: Rock Creek Park, May 21; C: Fort Marcy, June 11

Natural Heritage Series: Calvert Cliffs State Park Sat., April 24 (full-day field trip)

Amphibians Astir Sat., April 24 (4-10 pm)

Spring Hikes Along the C&O Canal B: Sun., Apr. 25 (8 am-5 pm); C: Sat., May 22 (8 am-5 pm)

Geology at Blockhouse Point Conservation Park Sun., May 2 (9 am-1 pm)

Spring Woods of Chapman's Forest Sun., May 2 (10 am-3 pm)

Springtime in West Virginia Mon., May 3 (8 am) to Wed., May 5 (4 pm)

Spring on Wheels Along the Potomac Fri., May 7 (8 am-3 pm)

Appalachian Spring Sun., May 9 (8:30 am-3:30 pm)

Bird ID Series: Spring Warblers Thurs., May 13 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sun., May 16 (6:45 am-1 pm)

Introduction to Bird ID by Voice Tues., May 18 (7:30-9 pm), Thurs., May 20 (7:30-9 pm) & Sun., May 23 (7 am-noon)

Spring Hike on Sugarloaf Mtn. Sat., May 22 (10 am-3 pm)

Butterflies of Blue Mountain Sat., May 22 (full-day field trip)

Migration Cycles on the Delaware Bay Thurs., May 27 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sun., May 30 (full-day field trip)

Botanical Gems of Montgomery County: Little Bennett Park Sun., June 6 (9 am-1 pm)

Birding Trek to Flag Ponds Nature Park Sun., June 6 (8 am-2 pm)

Breeding Bird Walk Sat., June 5 (7-11 am)

Natural Heritage Series: Suitland Bog Thurs., June 10 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sun., June 13 (morning field trip)

Summer in the Parks (8 am-12:30 pm) A: Sat., June 19; B: Sun., July 4; C: Fri., July 9; D: Fri., July 23; E: Sun., July 25

Natural Heritage Hike: Monocacy River Trail Sun., June 20 (8:30 am-2:30 pm)

Summer Shuffles Along the Canal Wednesdays (9-11:30 am) A: June 23; B: July 7; C: July 21

Advanced Dragonfly Studies: Common Darners, Spiketails, Cruisers, & Clubtails of the Mid-Atlantic Thurs., June 24 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sun., June 27 (full-day field trip)

Soggy Bogs, Tiny Trees, & Walks on the Wild Side Sat., June 26 (9 am) to Sun., June 27 (4 pm)

Butterfly Basics at Black Hill Park Sun., June 20 (8:30-11 am) free

Summer on Wheels Along the Patuxent Sat., July 3 (8 am-12:30 pm)

Natural History of Beetles Thurs., July 8 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sat., July 10 (2-9 pm)

Geology of the Fall Zone Sat., July 10 (9 am-noon)

Paddle on the Patuxent Sat., July 24 (4:30-8:30 pm)

Sunset Stroll in the Hollow Sun., July 25 (7-9 pm)

Wetland Plant ID Thurs., July 29 (7:30-9:30 pm) & Sat., July 31 (all-day field trip)

The Buzz on Bees and Wasps Sat., July 31 (8:30-11 am)

continued on page 10

AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY

Nature Escapes

Discover a new world!

ANS's Nature Travel Program offers nature-study trips outside the Mid-Atlantic region. Group size is kept small and most trips fill quickly. Call 301-652-9188 x11 for detailed itinerary, and check www.ANShome.org for frequent updates.

NEW!

Costa Rica: FAMILY Adventure in the Tropics July 10-19, 2010

Leaders: Sofia Cordero & Gregg Trilling

During the last 20 years, we've offered many trips to the tropical paradise of Costa Rica. Now we offer a family adventure to this beautiful Central American country. Perfect for kids and grandkids! We'll see wildlife and learn about tropical ecology and conservation. We'll also enjoy many adventures—river rafting, ziplines through the forest, horse-back riding to a tropical waterfall, nighttime walks on beaches where sea turtles nest, snorkeling amidst colorful tropical fishes, boat rides, hikes, and more. Visit mountains and areas along both coasts. Members' cost is \$2950 adults, \$2750 youth (ages 10-17), which includes all meals but not international air travel.

Quebec: Whales, Wings, & Water July 18-27, 2010

Leaders: David Farner & local guides

Enjoy the natural wonders of Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula and Gulf of St. Lawrence with this new Nature Escape. ANS partners with the local organization ENF Canada to offer a spectacular nature experience. Several boat trips give us chances to see many whales; if we're lucky, blue whale and beluga may be seen, in addition to the more common humpback, minke, and fin whales. Birding highlights range from the great Northern gannet nesting colony at Bonaventure Island to newly fledged songbirds and migrating shorebirds and seabirds. Members' cost of \$3500, double occupancy from Quebec City, includes most meals.

Where the Wild Things Roam: Yellowstone National Park September 9-19, 2010

Leaders: Stephanie Mason & Rob Gibbs

Truly one of the world's greatest natural areas, Yellowstone is honored by the United Nations as a World Heritage Site. After Labor Day, the crowds are gone, large mammals are returning to the valleys, and a great assortment of songbirds, water birds, and raptors are migrating. Enjoy the Park's geysers and other geothermal features while searching for birds, mammals, and other wildlife. With luck we could see wolves, bears, Swainson's hawks, Baird's sandpipers, and much more. ANS members' cost is \$2700, double occupancy from Bozeman, Montana.

South Texas: Subtropical Birds & Butterflies November 13-19, 2010

Leaders: Mark England & Hal Wierenga

South Texas is known as the country's best birding areas. More butterflies also occur here than anywhere else in the US. This week-long trip is based at a single motel in McAllen, TX, so settle in and head off each day on another nature-study excursion. Naturalists will be rewarded with a long list of sightings and experiences! ANS members' cost is \$1500, double occupancy from McAllen.

Costa Rica: Natural Wonders of the Neotropics February 15-25, 2011

Leaders: Stephanie Mason & Carlos "Charlie" Gómez
Planning has begun for the 2011 trek to the tropical wonderland of Costa Rica. Call to receive the itinerary and registration information as soon as the planning is complete.

Naturalist Calendar continued from page 9

Water Quality Monitoring Classes

Join the 100+ ANS water quality monitors and help protect this precious natural resource. Workshops and classes, below, are FREE to ANS members and SSL students; \$10 fee otherwise. Email wqm@audubonnaturalist.org for more information.

Tyson's Corner: A Look at Concrete and Streams Sat., April 10 (9:30 am-noon) Site TBA

Benthic Macro ID 1 Workshop Sat., May 1 (9 am-1 pm) Black Hill Regional Park

Benthic Macro ID 2 (Woodend, 7-9 pm)

A: Wed., May 19 - Beetles & Megaloptera

B: Wed., May 26 - Caddisflies

C: Wed., June 2 - Dragonflies, Damselflies & True Flies

D: Wed., June 9 - Mayflies
E: Wed., June 16 - Stoneflies & Review

Benthic Macroinvertebrate Adaptions Wed., May 12 (7-9 pm) Woodend

Know Your Invasive Plants: A Hands-on Workshop

Sat., May 22 (9:30 am-noon)
Teale Learning Center, Woodend

How to "Read" Your Stream
Wed., June 23 (7-9 pm) Woodend

ANS's Eco-Teachers' Course Gets an 'A' for Accreditation

In February, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) approved accreditation for ANS's new teacher professional development course, **Teachable Science**. Teachable Science trains educators to use the environment to build hands-on science skills with students. This MSDE authorization will allow ANS to offer one Continuing Professional Development credit to teachers who participate in our 15-hour course. We look forward to helping an expanding cohort of teachers integrate environmental education tools and techniques into their mandated science curriculum.



Anthony Washington

Motivated by community spirit, some ANS staff answered phones during the recent membership campaign at WAMU (the National Public Radio station in DC). Back row, L to R: Vicki Pursell, Karen Vernon, Lynne Frevert, Kathryn Mitchell, Liz Jones. Front row, L to R: Lynda DeWitt, Sarah Krizek, Pam Oves.

April-July Birding Trips

These free, volunteer-led walks offer birders a chance to explore new areas with other birding enthusiasts. Visit audubonnaturalist.org, then go to Nature Activities & Education/Adults for additional trips and more information. ANS also offers fee-based, instructional classes and field trips for beginning to mid-level birders. Check the Naturalist Calendar on page 9, or go to Classes/Field Trips under Nature Activities & Education/Adults on our website.

April

Sat., April 10
Charles County, MD Parks and Refuges
 2/3 day. Early songbird migrants, woodpeckers, waterfowl and waterbirds; eagles, hawks, and ospreys. **Meet time/place:** 7:30 am at Burger King on MD-210 (Indian Head Hwy) & MD-227 in Bryans Road, MD. Areas to include mixed woods, open glades; Smallwood Park, Mattawoman Creek/Potomac River, Chapman State Park; hiking boots and long pants suggested. **Make reservations** with leader Carol Gheblian, 301-753-6754.

Wed., April 14
Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA
 Half day. Songbirds, waterfowl, eagles, and other raptors. **Meet time/place:** 7:30 am inside refuge at central parking. **Make reservation** (6-person limit) with leader Jim Waggener, 703-567-3555.

Sun., April 18
Dyke Marsh, VA
 Half-day joint trip with Friends of Dyke Marsh. Learn about the conservation issues and observe waterbirds and migrant songbirds. **Meet time/place:** 8 am at the first parking lot of Belle Haven/Dyke Marsh picnic area. 12-person limit. **Make reservation** with leader Kurt Gaskill, 703-768-2172, or KurtCapt87@verizon.net.

Sat, April 24
Riley's Lock, C&O Canal, Montgomery Co., MD
 1/3 day. Nesting and early songbirds, waterbirds. **Meet time/place:** 7 am in parking lot. Woods and easy walking on C&O towpath. **Make reservation** (12-person limit) with leader Stephen Jones, 301-320-3518.

May

Sun., May 9
C&O Canal, MD Areas
 Half day. Songbirds, waterbirds, raptors. **Meet time/place:** 7 am in parking lot at Riley's Lock on the Canal. For more info, contact leaders Tony Futcher, 301-422-3927 or Floyd Murdoch, 301-937-2362.

Wed., May 12
Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA
 See April 14 listing for details.

Sun., May 16
Hughes Hollow (McKee Beshers WMA), Montgomery Co, MD
 Half day. Meet 7 am in parking lot at impoundment near corner of Hughes and Hunting Qtr Roads. Spring migrants and resident breeders in fields, woods, and impoundments. It may be muddy. **Make reservation** (required) with leaders: Len Bisson and Lisa Norwalk, 301-263-0932.

Sun., May 23
Blue Mash Nature Trail, Zion Road Section, Montgomery Co., MD
 Half day. Hawks, sparrows, warblers, and other woodland-edge birds. **Meet time/place:** 7 am at Zion Road parking lot. Waterproof footwear strongly recommended. **Make reservation** with leader Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

June

Wed., June 9
Banshee Reeks and the Dulles Wetlands, VA
 Half day. Joint trip with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. **Meet time/place:** 7 am at Dulles Wetlands. For those who can't make it at that time, we will

meet at the visitor's center at Banshee Reeks at 9 am. Hiking footwear (waterproof if you are coming to the Wetlands), long pants, and insect repellent advised. **Make reservation** (required) with leader Joe Coleman at joecoleman@rstarmail.com or 540-554-2542. Mary Ann Good will co-lead.

Wed., June 16
Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA
 See April 14 listing for details.

Sat., June 26
Blue Ridge Center, VA
 Half day. Joint trip with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. Songbirds; looking for blue-winged, cerulean, Kentucky warblers, and chats. **Meet place/time:** 8 am at Visitor Center, just north of Neersville, at 11611 Harpers Ferry Road (Rt. 671).

Bring snacks, drinks, long pants. **Make reservation** with leader Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rstarmail.com.

July

Wed., July 14
Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA
 See April 14 listing for details.

Sat., July 24
Delaware Coastal Areas
 Full day at Bombay Hook, Little Creek, Logan Tract, and other sites. Joint trip with MBC/MOS. Shorebirds, marshbirds, and some songbirds. Bring pack lunch. **Meet place/time:** 8:00 am at Bombay Hook Visitor Center parking lot. **Make reservation** (15-person limit) with John Bjerke, 240-401-1643. Cyndie Loeper will co-lead.

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3 Great Events

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 May 15, 2010

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www.BirdCapeMay.org
 Email: birdcapemay@njaudubon.org

NEW JERSEY AUDUBON
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New Jersey

Supported in part through a grant from the New Jersey Commerce, Economic Growth & Tourism Commission. Funding

Classified ads in the Audubon Naturalist News are \$50 per column inch. Send ad copy and questions to lynda@audubonnaturalist.org.

VACATION RENTALS

CAPE MAY, NJ Lovely amenity-packed 2BR/2BA condo close to nature center and beach; sleeps 6; \$125/night w/2-night minimum. Call Matt or Betty, 301-572-4715.

CAPE MAY, NJ area. Best of all worlds: new Victorian home and beaches, Monarch butterflies, birding, boardwalk and Victorian Cape May. 3 blocks to ocean in residential Wildwood Crest/Diamond Beach, NJ. LR w/FP, full KIT, 3 BR/2 BA, CAC, TV/cable, screened porch, lovely professional landscaped garden. Sleeps 6-7; ideal for 3 couples or small family. Spring/fall wkends, 2 nights min; summer, 1 week min. No smoking/pets. Photos: <http://web.me.com/lizkw>. Chris White: 703-241-1831, chriswww@aol.com.

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SERVICES

INVASIVE PLANT SOLUTIONS Find alternatives to pest plants in your yard. Email Paul@InvasivePlantSolutions.com or call 301-512-8299.

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SOLAR LAWN MOWING No emissions, little noise! Sign up for the 2010 season. 301-787-5018, www.solarmowing.com.

Weekly Plant Clinic

Master Gardeners will have a "help desk" outside Woodend's Sanctuary Shop on Saturdays, 10-noon, from April 4 through September. Bring questions and samples!



Summer Camp 2010!
Spots Still Available

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Howdy Partners and **Planet Partners**

June 21-25, grades 3-4 and 5-6

Backyard Bugs and **Magical Potions & Slimy Notions**

June 21-July 2 and July 19-30, grades 1-2, half day

Limited space in our Middle School Adventure series!

Check out the **catalog & register online** at ANSHome.org, or call 301-652-9188 x15



Jill Ward

GreenKids students from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School **Lilly Berman** and **Bill Sokolove** were "worm ambassadors" at a Whole Foods store in Bethesda last January. These and other students along with GreenKids' naturalist **Jennifer Chambers**, in back, showed shoppers how to reduce solid waste using worm compost bins.

2010 CAPE MAY SCHOOL OF BIRDING

April 3
Field Sketching
With Michael O'Brien & Louise Zemaitis

April 24
Backyard Bird Sounds: Introduction to Birding by Ear
With Don Freiday & Mark Garland

May 1-2
Birding by Ear
With Michael O'Brien & Louise Zemaitis

May 6-7
Warblers by Sight and Sound
With Louise Zemaitis & Michael O'Brien

May 8-10
Spring Migration Peak Week
With Louise Zemaitis & Michael O'Brien

May 28-29
Appalachian Birdsong Immersion
With Don Freiday & Mark Garland

July 29
Shorebirds in their Finery at Bombay Hook
With Don Freiday & Mark Garland

Twenty-two Birding Workshops in 2010



Woodend's Weekly Bird Walks

Meet at 8 a.m. outside the Audubon Sanctuary Shop every Saturday through June 26. Bring binoculars or use ours. Walks last approximately one hour. Registration is not required.

Top Vote Getter in theknot.com, Bethesda Magazine, and Washingtonian Bride & Groom



Holland Photo Arts

Consider Woodend for your next event

- ☞ *weddings*
- ☞ *anniversary parties*
- ☞ *birthday parties*
- ☞ *retirement parties*
- ☞ *memorial events*
- ☞ *bar/bat mitzvah parties*

Contact Rebecca Robinson at 301-652-9188 x38 or rebecca@audubonnaturalist.org

What Makes It Really Spring?

By Cecily Nabors

Scientifically speaking, the first day of spring is the vernal equinox, when day and night are of equal length. However, a naturalist may have a more personal definition.

For some, spring officially starts when the streaky red hoods of skunk cabbage poke out of a bog. For others, it's when catkins of bloom dangle from birches, or when chimes of spring peepers ring out, or when bluebells adorn moist woodlands. I've sometimes declared it to be spring when I found my first Jack-in-the-pulpits, or a jaunty display of Dutchman's breeches, or the pristine white petals of bloodroot.

For many birders, though, Official Spring is marked by the return of an eagerly awaited avian migrant. When a special bird reappears, we feel that the great cycle of life is continuing as it should. And if the birds fulfill their promise to come back, surely we have an added chance at life, too.

Some people claim that the essential requirement for spring is hearing the high-pitched twitters of a woodcock's wings in courtship flight. That doesn't work for me; woodcocks are too hard to find these days. I want my spring guaranteed.

My friend Diane declares that it's not spring until she hears or sees a Louisiana waterthrush. One April day when I was at Paint Branch, I heard the sharp call notes of that very bird. The waterthrush song always

makes me smile, with its three slurred "now hear this" introductory notes followed by a mix of conversational phrases. The bird was investigating a boggy area near the creek. He lifted to a tree near me, threw back his stripy head, and sang and sang. Okay, I conceded, who could doubt that it was spring?

Naturally, we all celebrate the return of Eastern phoebes with their bobbing tails and quirky voices; yellow-breasted chats whose eccentric vocalizations issue invisibly from thickets; and Baltimore orioles, fiery bright, tossing melodies from the tree-tops. Their renewed presence, their music and beauty mean so much after a cold dark winter.

One April when I was at Great Falls, my heart knew it was spring when I saw that the eagle's nest on Conn Island seemed safe from failure. A majestic parent eagle stood on the huge nest feeding a small dark downy fledgling. The youngster gobbled the parent's offerings, then struggled over to the high rim of the nest, rested its head as if on a pillow, and went to sleep. The parent, with white head up and yellow eyes watchful, stood guard while the little one napped in the warm spring sun.

In some years, I'm likely to say spring has arrived with the first sibilant song of a blue-gray gnatcatcher. I love to watch these little bright-eyed charmers as they flit about, flashing their long white-edged tails. They

further endear themselves to me by using the orange bud-scales of beeches, my favorite trees, when they build their small round nests.

On an April day when I heard for Rock Creek, a day when it's warm and not windy, bright with sun and a descant of bird song, it's hard to say which first-of-season bird embodies the true beginning of spring. I can't choose among delightful options: a northern parula with those over-the-top buzzy notes coming from his brilliant yellow throat, a white-eyed vireo caroling a series of "chick bury-o chick" songs atop a multiflora rose tangle, or a silent palm warbler with that constantly pumping tail.

As you can see, the bird that "makes it spring" for me is a variable consequence of mood and serendipity. There's no rule. Rightness is all.

Sometimes spring clicks into place for me in an unexpected but thoroughly satisfying way. One early April day while I was in our woods engaged in the ongoing battle with garlic mustard and honeysuckle, I heard a familiar, lively song. I laughed with pleasure. It was our first spring catbird! I hadn't realized how much I'd missed him. Dapper in his gray suit and black cap, he sang cheerful encouragement while I pulled up invasive plants.

Then a downy woodpecker complained about our empty suet feeder, so I lugged my bagful of weeds to the garage and brought out some suet. The little downy hung back. The first bird to enjoy the feast was my blithe companion, the catbird.

"Welcome home," I told him. "Now, it's officially spring."

A regular contributor to Audubon Naturalist News, Cecily Nabors is Coordinator of the Natural History Field Studies Program.



C.S. Robbins, USGS-PWRC

Photos Courtesy of Fish & Wildlife Service

 **DUMBARTON OAKS**
RESEARCH LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

DESIGNING WILDLIFE HABITATS
A SYMPOSIUM
MAY 14-15, 2010

GARDEN & LANDSCAPE STUDIES AT DUMBARTON OAKS
WASHINGTON, DC 202-339-6460 DOAKS.ORG

From top: Baltimore oriole, Jack-in-the-pulpit, yellow-breasted chat, Virginia bluebells, and a gray catbird.



Chances are you know **John Bjerke** or have benefited from his volunteer work at ANS, which began more than 25 years ago. John has served multiple terms on the ANS Board, including two terms as President, and he continues to serve as a longtime member of the Environmental Education Committee. John leads local forays and nature travel trips; records bird sightings for the Voice of the Naturalist; helps with membership

mailings; birds for the *Bloomin' Birdathon*; volunteers, often all day, at the Nature Fair and Auction; and is a Holiday Fair veteran. As if all this wasn't enough, John began coordinating the free birding trips program two years ago in addition to leading some of these walks himself. (See Listing, page 11)

A veteran hiker and camper when he left his home state of Oregon for the DC area more than three decades ago, John signed up for an ANS outing to the Battle Creek Cypress Swamp. On that trip, John discovered that birding, not hiking, was the focus—and he was hooked. John bought his first pair of binoculars at the ANS Bookshop and within a few years was recruited by Paul DuMont to lead local birding trips for ANS. Many thanks, John, for all you do for ANS! You are truly an invaluable asset to the Society.

Thanks also to all the other ANS Free Birding Trip leaders: Bob Abrams, Paul Baicich, Len Bisson, Joan Boudreau, Mike Bowen, Gwen Brewer, Larry Cartwright, Joe Coleman, Paul DeAnna, Tony Fatcher, Carol Gheblian, Jim Green, Stephen Jones, Wallace Kornack, Cyndie Loeper, Floyd Murdoch, Lisa Norwalk, Chris Ordway, Paul Pisano, Lydia Schindler, Charles Studholme, Jim Waggener, and Frank Witebsky.

ANS Loves Volunteers!

Opportunities are at Woodend unless otherwise indicated. For details on these and other ways to help ANS, contact Liz Jones at 301-652-9188 x30 or volunteer@AudubonNaturalist.org.

Audubon Nature Fair: Sunday, May 2 Volunteers are needed at nature stations, at GreenSquare, and with traffic control, admissions, setup, clean up, and more! Opportunities prior to the Fair as well. FREE admission for volunteers.

Summer Opportunities for Students Summer Nature Camps: June 21–August 20 (minimum one-week commitment); Audubon Sanctuary Shop; Grounds Assistants. Must be entering ninth grade or above in the Fall. Flexible scheduling.

Grounds Stewards Join a team of volunteers that helps maintain the Woodend Sanctuary, including its new native plant garden.

ANS Volunteer Reception Wednesday, April 14, 7-9 p.m. at Woodend

Join fellow volunteers for refreshments, remarks by ANS Executive Director Neal Fitzpatrick, and a presentation by botanist Cris Fleming on "Spring Wildflowers of the Potomac River Gorge." Presentation will begin at 7:30. RSVP by April 9 to volunteer@AudubonNaturalist.org or 301-652-9188 x30.

AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY'S Bloomin' Birdathon

30TH ANNIVERSARY
APRIL 16 - MAY 16, 2010

Top Five Reasons to Participate

1. Impress your friends by telling them you saw an ovenbird or a pink lady's slipper.
2. Support our environmental education and conservation programs.
3. Indulge your competitive side by identifying as many wildflowers and/or birds as you can.
4. Take a walk and enjoy nature.
5. Receive a special discount coupon at our Audubon Sanctuary Shops or online store.

Participating is fun and easy!

Find out how at www.ANShome.org (Special Events/Bloomin' Birdathon), or contact Loree Trilling at 301-652-9188 x35, ltrilling@audubonnaturalist.org

**Open to novice and experienced
wildflower and bird enthusiasts of all ages**

Special thanks to **Anthropologie** for donating 10% of sales receipts to ANS during a private launch of its new store in Chevy Chase. During the two-hour event, loyal Anthropologie customers spent close to \$4,000 on unique purchases. And ANS is grateful to all for their support!



Get Lively This Spring!

Spring classes in the Natural History Field Studies Program, cosponsored by The Graduate School and ANS, begin April 8.

Spring Birding Freshwater Ecosystems
Biology for Naturalists Spring Flower ID
Reptiles & Amphibians *and more!*

For more information, go to www.ANShome.org/natureactivities/adults.

ANS Seeks Auction Committee Chairs & Donations

To make this year's auction—scheduled for November 20, 2010—fun and profitable, we're seeking enthusiastic leaders! Auction co-chairs Kathy Rushing and Leslie Cronin are especially looking for committee chairs for **Donations; Special Projects**, such as the raffle and wishing tree; **Decorations; Signage; Displays; and Publicity**.

Many of the jobs can be done at home, while others will be done at Woodend and involve working with other volunteers. The auction chairs and volunteer coordinator, Liz Jones, will provide training and support. For more details, please email Liz Jones (volunteer@audubonnaturalist.org) or call Liz (301-652-9188 x30).

Our goal this year is to raise \$50,000 in unrestricted funds for the work of ANS. To reach this goal, we'll need a team of leaders—and donated items, such as **Antiques, Collectibles, Fine Art, and Jewelry**.

In addition, the following items always attract many bidders: **tickets for sporting events, plays, and musical performances; gift certificates for restaurants; special services; and vacation rentals**.

We hope you'll consider making a donation and/or taking a leadership role in this year's auction. Donations may be dropped off at Woodend 9 am–5 p.m. weekdays or by special appointment on the weekend, or we can arrange for you to drop them off at Rust Sanctuary in Leesburg. Donation forms, which must accompany each donation, are available online and at Woodend and Rust.

If you have questions or comments, please email the auction committee (audubonauction2010@verizon.net) or call 301-652-9188 x18 and leave a message. *Thank you!*

MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE CONTRIBUTIONS

In memory of Dorothy R. Avery
George A. Avery

In memory of Batty Berenson
Jeannette & Ronald Eisler

In memory of Ginger Carroll
John Fay

In memory of Elizabeth W. Fitzpatrick
Pearl Klein

In memory of Hugh Mahanes
Mark England

In memory of Sally Ormsby
Hillary Zahm

In memory of Marcia Sward
Jane Benesch
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In memory of Donald E. Wynn
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Emmett & Kristin O'Keefe

In honor of Stephanie Mason & ANS Costa Rica Trip 2010
Lou DeMouy

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🐦 Nature Steward

Andrea Callem, Margaret McDaniel, Tamara Munk, Amy Sutter

🐦 Family

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🐦 Individual

Thomas Adams, Thomas Aurelio, Katharine Beckman, Alice Bender, Michael Bender, Sue Blumenthal, William Bortz, Maryann Brondi, Jean Brown, Sarah Clark, Dolores Conger, Lowell Curtis, Patricia Deveny, Ms. Margaret Donnelly, James Enloe, Anne Frances, Nancy C. Gaines, Suzanne Gamboa, Robin Loube, Jeff Maier, Marie Maltese, Andrea Martin, Robert Mertz, Sherri Morgan, Lois Neuman, Mary Lou Shannon, Karen Shanor, Arthur D. Silver, Katharine Simpson, Emily Southgate, Olga Sullivan, Tom Utley, Nella Valdez, Deborah Wagner, John Ward, Wendy Wilkinson, Debra Wynne

🐦 Senior

Eugenie Khorsrofian

Farewell Friend

Muriel S. Robinson, ANS finance director from 1983 to 2005, died of cancer on February 25, 2010. Muriel grew up in the Catskill Mountain region of Upstate New York and received a business degree from the University at Albany. She and her husband, Hank, were living in Florida at the time of Muriel's death. She is also survived by three children and two grandchildren. All of us at ANS offer our sympathy to Muriel's family and friends, and we thank Muriel for her many years of service.



Matt Mathias

One cold, snowy February day this winter, ANS received a surprise visitor. Seventh grader **Halle Pollack** walked into Woodend's Sanctuary Shop and delivered a homemade cake to staff! "I love making custom-designed cakes," said Halle, "and it makes me feel good to tell people they do a good job for our community." Halle bakes cakes for charitable organizations as part of a mitzvah project. Thank you, Halle. Your cake was as good as it looks!

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APRIL 16 - MAY 16, 2010
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**A Family Festival
Celebrating Spring!**

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