

AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY

# Naturalist Quarterly

Spring 2022

ANSHOME.ORG



Celebrating our **125<sup>th</sup>** and Building Toward the Future!



## Nature Needs All of Us

ANS NATURE ACTIVITIES & NEWS

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.

#### HEADQUARTERS

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

#### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 9 AM-5 PM

#### STORE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 11 AM-3 PM

#### GROUND HOURS

Dawn to dusk

#### ANS MEMBERSHIP

Student \$15  
Individual \$50  
Family \$65  
Nature Steward \$100  
Audubon Advocate \$200  
Sanctuary Guardian \$500  
Naturalists Council \$1,000  
Preservationist \$1,000+

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Rentals x38  
Volunteers x20  
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# Naturalist Quarterly

ANShome.org Spring 2022

From the Director	3
Map to the Future	4
Conservation	8
Connecting Youth to Nature	11
Children and Nature Photos	12
Adult Nature Programs	14
Naturalist Hour	20
Natural History Field Studies	22
Adults in Nature Photos	24
Member and Staff Photos	26
Stream Science	27
Families in Nature Photos	28
Nature Travel	30
Volunteer Corner	31
Naturally Latinos Conference 4	32
Restoration	34
Bloomin' Birdathon	36
Tributes	38
Registration Info	39

## From the Director

*We head home: through the gloss of rain or weight of snow, or the plum blush of dusk, but always— home, always under one sky, our sky. And always one moon like a silent drum tapping on every rooftop and every window, of one country—all of us— facing the stars hope—a new constellation waiting for us to map it, waiting for us to name it—together.*

— Final stanza of *One Today*, poem written by Richard Blanco for the 57th Presidential Inauguration, January 21, 2013

For me, spring is the season I most associate with hope. Hope wrapped in the scent of thawing earth. Hope peeking through green shoots emerging from the soil. Hope on the wings of migrating birds heading north to nesting grounds far away. And hope in the places and faces around the region where we honor our shared connection to nature.



We need hope more than ever as we push through the third calendar year of grappling with the pandemic. But hope is our new constellation. And you'll be dazzled by all that ANS plans to accomplish.

This spring, we will launch Woodend school field trips specifically designed for students with disabilities. I'm so excited to welcome teachers and students on a truly immersive experience in nature. It's thrilling to prepare to host our fourth Naturally Latinos Conference. The experience and talents of our keynote speakers and panelists are unparalleled. (See page 30

for information on how to register!). And it is wonderful to watch our community engagement projects flourish around the region as we build strong relationships that empower diverse audiences to enjoy, learn about and protect their local natural resources. All this work is made possible by support from members like you and from dozens of trusted partners who help us create authentic connections with new groups we aspire to serve.

And we will be doing the hard organizational work of planning for the future, too. Thank you to all of you who took our *Naming the Future* survey. After analyzing data from the survey, focus groups and roundtables, we will move into the Creation Phase of the name change project. This phase will synthesize recurring themes you helped us identify into names for consideration. I encourage you to submit your terrific ideas for a new name by email to [namingthefuture@anshome.org](mailto:namingthefuture@anshome.org).

Spring is also the season for ANS to start work on its new Strategic Plan. I'm proud that we have faithfully adhered to and achieved the goals set out in our 2018 -2022 Strategic Plan ([anshome.org/strategic-plan/](http://anshome.org/strategic-plan/)), even in the face of Covid-19. That success comes thanks to our dedicated staff who have pivoted a thousand times to ensure ANS faithfully delivers on its mission in new and creative ways, no matter what the circumstances!

Hope is all around us. I encourage you to sign up for an ANS program to soak in the promise of spring - listen to spring peepers, search for ephemeral wildflowers, or seek out those elusive spring warblers. Kickstart your spring by joining our Bloomin' Birdathon this year (see page 36) to support our mission work. And be sure to sign up for our Action Network to help us advocate for policies that protect nature right here at home. (see page 9). You can take pride in knowing that your membership, donations, participation, and words of encouragement keep hope at the center of all the work we do!

3

**Celebrating our 125<sup>th</sup> and Building Toward the Future!**

**Please support our Spring fund drive this April!**

**Help ANS continue to move forward restoring Woodend Nature Sanctuary and ensuring Nature for All through expanded nature education and advocacy.**

**Make your gift now at [anshome.org/give](http://anshome.org/give)**

# Map to the Future: Celebrating and Building Upon 125 Years of Achievement

by Lisa Alexander

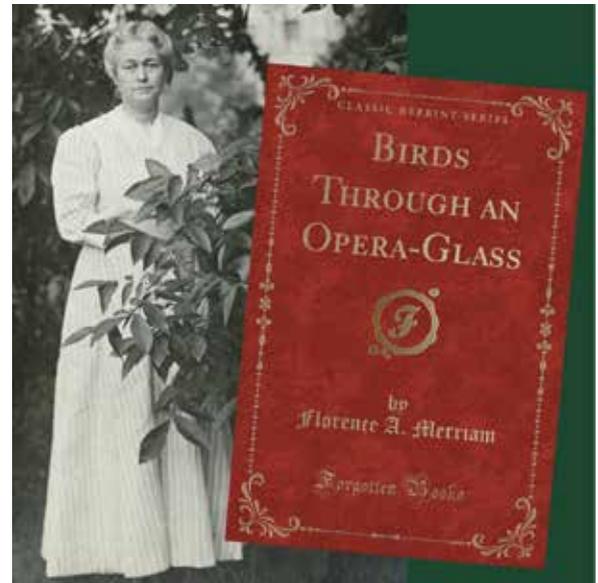


4

During this protracted pandemic, the ANS staff has a running joke. We say that when we went shopping at the home improvement store, the shelves were empty and the crystal balls were sold out. It must be a supply chain issue!

**I wonder what ANS members of the past would have thought of ANS today if they had a crystal ball of their own. Revisiting the ANS of the past is like going on a treasure hunt. We have much to be proud of in our 125 years of service in the DC metro region.**

Our history includes tidbits you might not know.



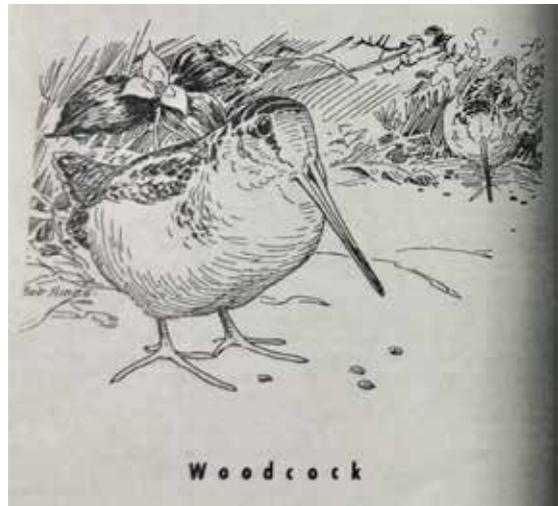
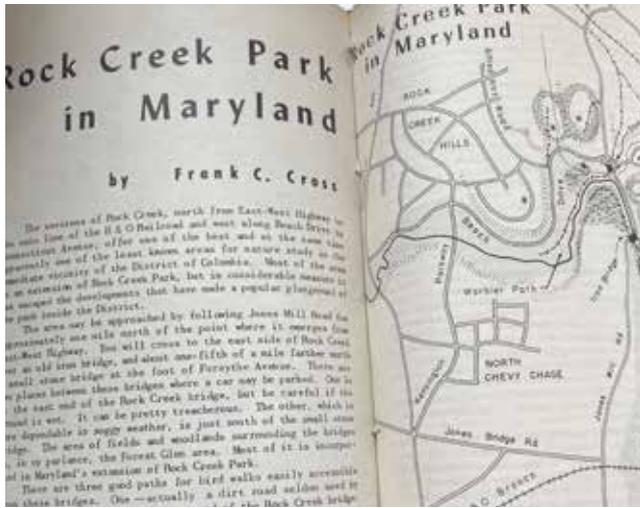
One of our founders, Florence Merriam Bailey, wrote an early, illustrated field guide, published in 1889 – *Birds through an Opera Glass*. No doubt, Bailey’s commitment to bird conservation and her formative influence on what was then named the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, helped usher in passage of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1914. Happily for us today, dangerous rollbacks to the MBTA, enacted during the previous administration, have been reversed and the full force of that foundational treaty still safeguards migratory birds to this day.



Photo by Jane Gamble

Blue-ribbon victories in our storied history include passage of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, preservation of the C&O Canal, conservation of Dyke Marsh and Huntley Meadows, creation of the Agricultural Reserve, keeping a Disney theme park out of the Virginia Piedmont, and saving Ten Mile Creek.

That’s a legacy of which we can all be proud.



Golden nuggets of ANS history can be found in our past publications including the *Wood Thrush* and *The Atlantic Naturalist*, precursors to today's *Naturalist Quarterly*. Colleagues recently brought me an article from the 1952 March/April edition of *The Atlantic Naturalist*. Frank Cross chronicles and maps his birdwatching adventures in and around what would become, a decade later, ANS headquarters at Woodend Nature Sanctuary. I like to imagine our benefactor, Marion Wells, feeding birds on her balcony while Cross tromped along nearby in the marshy lowlands of Rock Creek Park in Maryland spotting timberdoodles (woodcocks) and other species, including bobwhites, whippoorwills and ash trees now absent from our landscape.

What would Mrs. Wells and Mr. Cross have done if they had a crystal ball to consult? Would they approve of changing the organization's name from Audubon Society of the District of Columbia to Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States? How would they have reacted to the arrival of the Beltway and massive suburban development just steps away, development that wiped out the woodcock habitat for good? What would they make of the introduction of invasive species, the impacts of climate change? I suspect they would have consulted fellow ANS member and leader Rachel Carson. As one of the first scientists to understand and predict the potential scale of negative human impacts on wildlife, Carson might have helped Wells and Cross issue a broad call to action and involve as many people as possible in fighting to preserve the natural habitats in and around Woodend.

**The need for a broad call to action is where ANS stands today.**

We need all the residents of the DC region to understand the negative impacts of climate change and step up to mitigate its effects. To win our fight for the planet's future, we need EVERYONE – people of all ages, backgrounds, zip codes, identities and cultures. Only together will we successfully advocate for policies that fight the climate crisis and protect and restore the precious green spaces that remain.

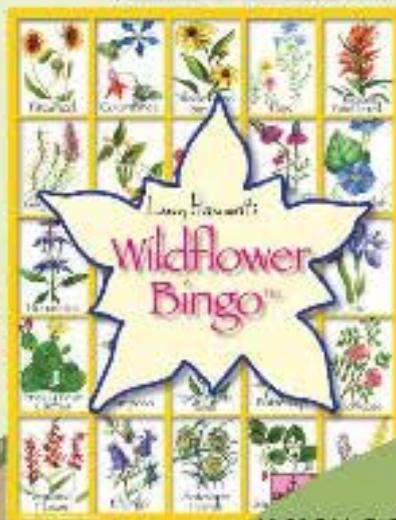
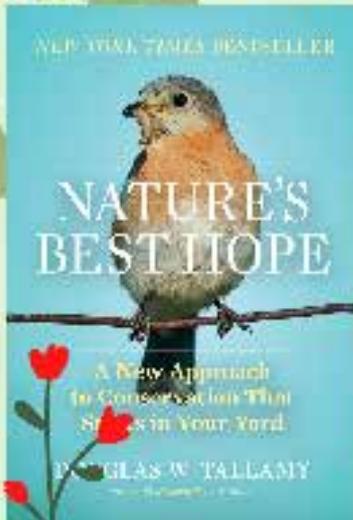
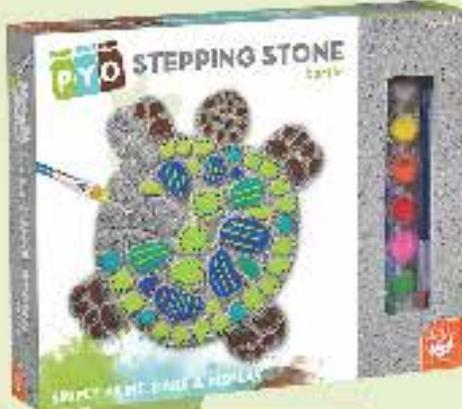
ANS continues to make progress on our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility strategic goals. We're leading the way by creating and delivering climate change lessons that will reach thousands of children in area public schools. We're mobilizing new communities across the region to enjoy, learn about and protect their local natural treasures. We're making nature more accessible to people of all abilities with our wheelchair accessible nature trail and our online programs.

And we're grappling with tough questions, some of which will be uncomfortable. We are examining our role in the big systems of climate crisis, structural racism, and exclusion from the environmental movement. And we are growing from that examination. It's evident throughout ANS. We're changing our name; diversifying our Board, staff and instructors; and we're creating new programming to issue a broad welcome to the entire population of our region. It's exciting!

**I am proud of the ANS community's embrace of this call to action and the changes that come with it. We are fortunate to have an enduring vision that inspires. We aim to do nothing less than 'create a larger, more diverse community of people who treasure the natural world and seek to preserve it.' And for all of us at ANS, that vision provides a crystal clear map to the future.**

# Get Your Garden Ready!

With help from the  
Naturalist Shop at Woodend



Open daily  
11am-3pm  
Closed Wed + Sun

[www.anshome.org/naturalist-shop](http://www.anshome.org/naturalist-shop)



Weddings  
Milestones  
Corporate Events

# Woodend Sanctuary & Mansion

Climate-controlled tent included  
[woodendsanctuary.org](http://woodendsanctuary.org)



“The venue is remarkable - beautiful, spacious, with lovely options for both outdoor and indoor weddings. Being able to have the ceremony and reception in the same space was key for us. It was really meaningful to us to be able to contribute to a space that also serves to educate others about nature and the environment. Long story short, can't recommend this space enough.  
It's cliché to say, but it really was a magical day, and Woodend was a huge part of that.”

# Conservation



## Policy and Advocacy News

**New research continues to show greater harms of fossil (“natural”) gas to our health and climate.** Scientists have used satellite and aerial technology to pinpoint huge, previously unmeasured methane leaks at gas drilling fields throughout the country. And new studies have shown that gas stoves in kitchens constantly leak, even when they are turned off, exposing everyone in the household to toxins and increasing asthma rates among kids. Fossil gas used for cooking and heating is one of the greatest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas, like Washington, DC. This new research supports ANS’s campaign to ultimately phase out fossil “natural” gas in favor of renewable electricity. Photo: Richard Hurd / CC BY 2.0

### Washington, DC

**Thank you for raising your voice in favor of the Climate Commitment Act of 2021 and Clean Energy DC Building Code Amendment Act of 2021!** ANS testified in support of both pieces of legislation with amendments on January 25, and 65 activists used our tool to send their own letters. Thank you! We continue to demand more from DC Councilmembers when it comes to enacting better policies to combat the climate crisis.

### Maryland

**Thank you for helping to protect a forest!** With 105 acres of forest at risk of being sold for commercial development, ANS members and supporters took action, sending more than 1,000 letters to Congress. Together, we urged lawmakers to transfer the land owned by NASA in Greenbelt, MD to the Patuxent Research Refuge. So far, our advocacy is paying off! The Bay Journal reports that The White House rejected the land sale and directed the agency overseeing federal land sales to resubmit recommendations.

### **TAKE ACTION - Support Montgomery County’s Forest**

**Coalition!** ANS and a group of local and state environmental advocates have been working towards protecting Montgomery County’s forests and trees. The Coalition is currently pushing for “no net loss” and “net gain” of forest.

### Virginia

**Thank you for speaking up to protect Bles Park!** ANS joined Northern Virginia partners in a January 11 letter asking for a more sustainable proposal for proposed development of Loudoun County’s Bles Park that would destroy sensitive plant and animal habitats. Supervisors voted to move forward with the project on January 18 with some improvements. ANS will continue to support Loudoun County Wildlife in advocating for better approaches as future phases of the project progress.

### **It’s General Assembly Time!**

In spring, ANS works with statewide partners to track bills in the Maryland and Virginia General Assembly. We advocate in favor of good environmental bills, fully funded environmental budgets, and testify at agency and oversight hearings.

Visit <http://conservationblog.anshome.org/tag/2022SpringNQ/> to read all the articles mentioned here.



## Workshop: Environmental & Conservation Advocacy 101

Wednesday, May 11 (1-3:30 pm)

ANS members \$20; nonmembers \$30

Instructor: Eliza Cava (via Zoom)

Register at [anshome.org/training](https://anshome.org/training)

**What's your environmental issue?** Our workshop will cover the following key introductory skills:

- communicating your WHY
- connecting environmental solutions with human needs
- building campaigning skills

Everyone can strengthen their advocacy skills at this workshop!

## Volunteer with ANS Conservation on Advocacy & Policy!

We have kicked off our new Conservation Advocacy volunteer program!

Email [jamoni.overby@anshome.org](mailto:jamoni.overby@anshome.org) to get involved.

## Conservation Cafés

Join us for inspiring virtual conversations on nature conservation topics. Your \$10-15 registration fee supports our Conservation Program! Scholarships available. See detailed descriptions and register at [anshome.org/conservation-cafe](https://anshome.org/conservation-cafe).

Note, there will be no Conservation Café in March. Instead, please attend Naturally Latinos Conference! Register at [www.anshome.org/naturally-latinos](https://www.anshome.org/naturally-latinos).

• **The Condor and the Eagle: Film Screening & Discussion.** Thursday, April 21, 7-9 pm. Four leaders from impacted communities embark on an extraordinary trans-continental adventure from the Canadian Boreal forests to deep into the heart of the Amazonian jungle to unite the peoples of North and South America and deepen the meaning of justice. Join ANS for a film screening and conversation afterwards. FREE for Naturally Latinos 2022 registrants. A portion of this event's proceeds will be donated to a DC-area indigenous community organization grappling with environmental justice issues.

• **Is Nature Accessible for Everyone? Team River Runner Works to Make it So!** Wednesday, May 11, 7-8:30 pm: Hear from Joe Mornini, CEO of Team River Runner, about how his organization helps wounded veterans and others with disabilities experience nature through boating. How does nature help those in need of healing, and how can we all help ensure that nature is accessible?

• **Bird Conservation is Actually All About Humans.** Wednesday, June 1, 7-8:30 pm: So much of what drives our ability to conserve birds and other wildlife is really about managing human behaviors, which requires us to look inside – what motivates us? What do we really want on our landscapes? How much do we need, and who gets to decide? Join Amplify the Future Co-Founder and current President of DC Audubon Tykee James for this talk during Black Birders Week.

### Get involved and learn more!

Sign up for our Action Alert Network at <https://anshome.org/action-alerts/> and visit <https://conservationblog.anshome.org>.

# Connecting Youth to Nature

The ANS Nature Preschool brings the gift of wonder to children!

The ANS Nature Preschool believes children learn best when they follow their hearts and interests and engage in the natural world with all of their senses. Children are naturally curious about the environment and their discoveries guide them to great heights. ANS Nature Preschool's focus on the whole-child through its dynamic and emergent curriculum establishes a foundation for a lifetime love of learning and nature. Our 40-acre nature sanctuary, small class sizes, and talented and engaged teaching staff make us unique and set us apart from all other schools. Our all-outdoor classes and vaccination requirements make us a reassuringly safe school option. All programs run September through May.

## Drop-off Programs:

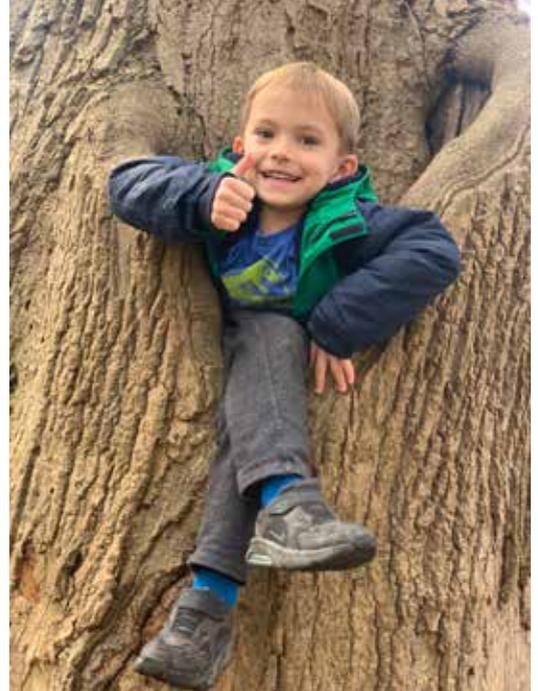
Saplings for 3 - 5 year old children  
M - TH: 8:30 am - 1:30 pm, F: 8:30 - 11:30 am

Oaks Forest Kindergarten for 4.5 - 6 year old children  
M - TH: 9 am\*- 2 pm, F: 9 am\*- 12 pm  
\*Early arrival available at 8:30 am

## Adult-Child Programs:

Acorns for children 4 years old and younger with their favorite adult  
W or TH: 9 - 10:15 am or 10:45 am - 12 pm

Contact [stephanie.bozzo@anshome.org](mailto:stephanie.bozzo@anshome.org) & 301.652.9188 x32 for more information or visit [www.anshome.org/ans-preschool](http://www.anshome.org/ans-preschool).



## Summer Camp 2022

The health and safety of our campers is our top priority. All campers are required to be fully vaccinated by the start of their camp session. Additional measures such as indoor masking, boosters, cohorting, and social distancing may be required based on the status of the pandemic. Updated safety protocols will be announced by April 11. Protocols are subject to change throughout the summer. Learning and fun in nature will continue as usual!

**The following camps still have space:**

**K/Session 2/Backyard Birds & Bugs Galore**  
**3rd&4th/Session 1/Fossil Hunters & Rock Creek Critters**  
**3rd&4th/Session 4/Slugs to Bugs & Nighttime Flyers**  
**5th&6th/Week 8/Bay Quest**  
**7th&8th&9th/Week 6/Beginning Backpacking**  
**7th&8th&9th/Week 7/Hiking Club**  
**7th&8th&9th/Advanced Bay Quest**  
**10th&11th&12th/Week 2/Advanced Wilderness Skills**  
**10th&11th&12th/Week 7/Advanced Mountain Outpost**

## Family Walks at Woodend

**First Saturday of each month (9-10 am)**  
**Members \$12 per family, nonmembers \$20**

Join naturalist and educator, Frank Sanford, on a leisurely walk through the habitats at Woodend. Explore the wonders of trees, meadows, streams, insects, birds, and everything Woodend has to offer! Limited to 6 families. Register at [anshome.org/woodend-tours](http://anshome.org/woodend-tours).

We also have **NATURE BACKPACKS** available! Visit our Naturalist Shop to check out a backpack (ID required) that will have tools and activities you and your family can use to explore nature at Woodend Sanctuary. Backpacks are free for check-out in the shop but must be returned by 3 pm. Shop hours are currently M, T, Th, F and Sa from 11 am-3 pm.

# Connecting Youth to Nature



## Days Off Camps (Grades K-5)

Friday, April 1, 2022 (1-5 pm)

Monday, May 2, 2022 (8:45 am-5 pm)

4/1 Members \$60; nonmembers \$70

5/2 Members \$120; nonmembers \$140

Do you want your children to be outside in nature learning and having fun on their day off from school? Then send them to our Days Off Camp! We'll explore the Woodend Nature Sanctuary, get muddy in the pond, build forts, and play games. [REGISTER HERE](#)

## Spring Break Camp (Grades K-5)

Monday, April 11-Thursdays, April 14, 2022

8:45 am-3 pm

**SPACE AVAILABLE IN GRADES 3-5 CAMP**

**K-2 CAMP FULL**

Extended camp available until 5:30 pm for \$100

Members \$365; nonmembers \$395

Experience the wonders of Spring at Camp Audubon! Catch frogs in the pond, hike to Rock Creek, and get your hands dirty in our Learning Garden! [REGISTER HERE](#)

## NATURE BIRTHDAY PARTIES AT ANS

**Create lasting memories for your child**

**and also support nature conservation and education**

Explore Woodend Nature Sanctuary with a naturalist and enjoy nature-themed activities and games all outdoors!

**For details, visit [anshome.org/parents](https://anshome.org/parents)**  
**and click the "BIRTHDAY PARTIES" tab**

# Children and Nature Photos

12



## Oaks and Saplings: Future Nature Champions

Outdoor learning is back in full swing at Woodend Nature Sanctuary! Students in the ANS Nature Preschool Oaks and Saplings classes enjoy active, hands-on outdoor lessons and play. At ANS Nature Preschool, girls and boys explore the outdoors rain or shine and engage with the environment in deep and meaningful ways. For more information, please visit [anshome.org/preschool](https://anshome.org/preschool). Photos by Ben Israel



# Adult Nature Programs

*Wild places are closer than you think.®*

## ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR ADULT PROGRAMS

- Visit [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults)
- All changes/cancellations/transfers must be handled through the EE office.
- Questions? Call Pam at 301-652-9188 x16 or email [pam.oves@anshome.org](mailto:pam.oves@anshome.org)

### Fridays at Carderock

**Section C: March 4 (10 am-2:30 pm)**

**Section D: April 1 (9:30 am-2:30 pm)**

**Section E: May 6 (9:30 am-2:30 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Each hike members \$35; nonmembers \$49**

An elder of a Native American tribe from the Pacific Northwest advised: *There is more to be learned by climbing the same mountain a hundred times than by climbing a hundred different mountains.* Following this admonition, our Senior Naturalist offers this series of broad-based nature explorations along the Potomac River's C&O Canal and its varied habitats—from upland rocky woods to rich floodplain forests. Our “searching for spring” hikes will return each month to a stretch of towpath from the Carderock Recreation Area upriver to Widewater. *We'll retrace our steps along the level Canal back to Carderock for a total of around 4 miles.* We'll celebrate the building signs of spring in March. In April and May, we'll enjoy spring's great burst of new life, both in the plant world and amongst all manner of wildlife, including birds, butterflies, reptiles and amphibians, and mammals.

### Late Winter Birding at Black Hill

**Saturday, March 5 (8:30-11 am)**

**Leader: Mark England**

**Members \$30; nonmembers \$42**

Bundle up for our final walk in this season's Winter Birding at Black Hill Regional Park series. Aimed at beginning to mid-level birders, you'll enjoy an exploration around the Park in a search for waterfowl, sparrows, woodpeckers, raptors, and other both resident and overwintering species. The Park's habitats are varied, and include wetlands and Little Seneca Lake, as well as forest and field. *Most Park trails are natural surface with possible muddy and uneven stretches. Some may include short stretches of uphill/downhill.*

### Woodcock Watch

**Saturday, March 5 (5:15-7:30 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

In his *Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold described the mating display of the American Woodcock as a “sky dance.” Announcing its presence with nasal “peents”, the male woodcock ascends high in the sky at dusk.



To the accompaniment of a constant twittering, it circles, then plummets back to earth in a series of zigzag movements, wings whistling. On this field program to a natural area in upper Montgomery County, we'll hope to be lucky enough to catch a performance of this seasonal drama.

### ANS COVID Policy for Outdoor Adult Programs

Continuing this spring, both leaders and participants are asked to observe social distancing throughout our outdoor field trips. We request that any participant or leader who has not been vaccinated for Covid-19 wear a mask at all times. Of course, all participants are welcome to wear a mask if they are more comfortable doing so. Twelve will be our usual group size maximum, unless an outing's focus/ and or field conditions call for a smaller group. All of the policies above are subject to change.

## Winter Walk Along the Canal: Riley's Lock

Wednesday, March 9 (10 am-12:30 pm)

Leader: Stephanie Mason

Members \$33; nonmembers \$46

Join this final session in our Winter Canal Walk series. We'll keep our eyes and ears open for over-wintering wildlife, practice botany skills, and enjoy the expansive views along the Potomac River which this season provides. We're certain to notice signs of spring's advance both in plant life and birdsong.



## March Madness Along the River

Saturday, March 12 (9 am-1:30 pm)

Leader: Stephanie Mason

Members: \$35; nonmembers \$49

With the official start of spring at hand, we'll take a hike along the Potomac River where nature lovers can observe the tug-of-war between lingering winter and imminent spring—what our Senior Naturalist calls March Madness! She'll lead you on a nearly 4-mile round-trip hike along the Potomac Heritage Trail on the Virginia side of the River: from Riverbend Park downriver to Great Falls Park and back. Along the way, there will be plants and animals to catch our interest in this protected area's rocky woods, sycamore bottomlands, and flowing River waters. *The riverside trail, which may be muddy and/or slippery, is mostly level but includes a few rocky stretches.*

## Geology of Travilah Barrens

Thursday, March 17 (9:30 am-12:30 pm)

Leader: Joe Marx

Members \$33; nonmembers \$46

Located in southwestern Montgomery County between Potomac and Darnestown, the Serpentine Barrens Conservation Park preserves a piece of oceanic crust stranded on our continent following a tectonic collision that occurred about 450 million years ago. The park, commonly called Travilah Barrens, encompasses three land units totalling more than 350 acres. The soils are thin, dry and somewhat poisonous, producing interesting outcrops and a distinctive ecology. We will hike a mile or two within the North Unit, the largest and least disturbed part of the preserve. *The trails are primitive, with frequent stretches of gravel or mud, often covered in leaves.*

WAITLIST  
OPEN

## Beginning Birding Walk

Saturday, March 19 (8:30-11:30 am)

Leader: Mark England

Members \$33; nonmembers \$46

If you're curious about birds and bird watching but don't know where to begin, this "how to get started" outing is for you. No experience is required! The goal of our field morning, which visits Black Hill and/or Little Bennett Regional Parks in upper Montgomery County, is to develop the ability to find, study, and identify birds in their natural environment. Birding tools such as field guides, binoculars, and other resources will also be discussed.

## Wonders at Woodend: Spring Equinox Forest Bathing Walk

Saturday, March 19 (9:30 am-12:30 pm)

Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley

Members \$35; nonmembers \$49

Celebrate the Eve of the Spring Equinox at Woodend with Melanie Choukas-Bradley, a longtime ANS field trip leader and author of *The Joy of Forest Bathing—Reconnect with Wild Places & Rejuvenate Your Life* as well as several regional nature books. Discover the magic of *shinrin-yoku*, translated as "forest bathing," a nature-oriented mindfulness practice that originated in Japan and has become popular all over the world. Experience the restoration of our Woodend Sanctuary as we explore and commune with the living things in its meadows, forest, and Blair Garden. Our leader is a Nature & Forest Therapy Guide with certification from the Association of Nature & Therapy Guides and Programs. *A walk will be scheduled each season in 2022.*



## Spring Early Birds

- A. Sunday, March 20 (8-11 am) – Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, DC (Rob Hilton)
- B. Saturday, March 26 (7:30-10:30 am) – Occoquan Bay NWR, VA (Paul Pisano)
- C. Saturday, April 2 (7:30-10:30 am) – Patuxent Research Refuge/Main Tract (Lisa Shannon & Rob Hilton)
- D. Thursday, April 7 (7:30-10:30 am) – Huntley Meadows, VA (Mike Bowen & Anne Cianni)
- E. Sunday, April 10 (7-10 am) – Blue Mash Nature Trail, MD (Len Bisson)
- F. Thursday, April 14 (7-10 am) – Lois Green Conservation Park, MD (Mark England)
- G. Wednesday, April 20 (7-10 am) – Wooten’s Mill Park, MD (Mike Bowen & Anne Cianni)
- H. Sunday, April 24 (7-10 am) – McKee Beshers WMA, MD (Len Bisson)
- I. Friday, April 29 (8-11 am) – National Arboretum, DC (Paul Pisano)

Each walk: **Members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

Immerse yourself in the phenomenon of spring migration with this series of bird walks at nearby parks. Our walks are designed for beginning and intermediate birders for whom the spring pulse of bird activity can often be overwhelming. We’ll search for both resident and migrant birds by sight and sound. We’ll discuss the arrival sequence of spring travelers (and the departure of overwintering species) as we practice finding birds in the field. *Our trips include walking on natural surface trails and/or boardwalks which may be muddy, uneven, and/or slippery. Trips E, F G and I include some mild uphill/downhill. Participants should bring their own binoculars.*

## Spring Saunters Along the Canal

**Wednesdays (10 am-12:30 pm)**

**Section A: March 23 - Carderock**

**Section B: April 6 - Widewater**

**Section C: April 20 - Violettes Lock**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Each walk members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

Enjoy these leisurely walks along the Towpath through close-in portions of the C&O Canal. The focus of our walks, starting from different locations, will be the general natural history of the varied habitats along the Potomac River and Canal. We’ll proceed at a slow “naturalist’s shuffle,” as we experience the glorious unfolding of spring. We’ll stop often to observe birds, wildflowers and other plants, butterflies, snakes, turtles, and whatever else we might find. *This series will continue every other week in May.*

## Early Spring Wildflower Hike

**Friday, March 25 (10 am-1 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

Beat the winter blues by joining this search for the earliest spring wildflowers in the woods and bottomlands along the Potomac River near Carderock Recreation Area, just outside the Beltway. We’ll look for the greening leaves, swelling buds, and (fingers crossed) unfolding flowers of

species such as Harbinger of Spring, Early Saxifrage, Spring Beauty, and Bloodroot. *NOTE: our roughly 1.5 mile hike will include some uneven, rocky, hilly, and likely muddy stretches on natural surface trails.*



Photo by Helen Kavanagh

## Spring in the Parks

**(9 am-1:30 pm)**

**A: Saturday, March 26 – Jug Bay Natural Area, MD**

**B. Wednesday, April 13 – National Arboretum, DC**

**C. Sunday, April 24 – Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge, VA**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$35; nonmembers \$49**

Join our Senior Naturalist for these broad-based nature hikes in three of our region’s protected areas. On each outing, we’ll experience the dramatic seasonal changes in the natural world ignited by spring’s longer hours of daylight and warming temperatures. We’ll search for showy wildflowers, the unfolding leaves of trees and shrubs, and all manner of spring wildlife activity. Our first destination visits the coastal plain woodlands along the Patuxent River in Prince George’s County, MD. In mid-April, we’ll explore the Fern Valley section of the National Arboretum in the District of Columbia. Later in the month we’ll walk the bottomland habitats adjacent to Belmont Bay near Occoquan, VA. *Be prepared to walk up to 3 miles on natural surface trails which may be muddy/slippery and include some mild hills.*

## Early Spring in Cape May

Monday, March 28 (8 am) - Tuesday, March 29 (4 pm)

Leader: Mark Garland

Members: \$120; nonmembers \$168

WAITLIST  
OPEN

Visit the varied habitats of Cape May with a local naturalist—when winter and spring are still mixing in the natural world. On Monday, walk the beach at Cape May Point and scan the waters for loons, gannets, scoters, and more, and see if any treasures have washed up onto the beach. Stroll trails through woods and along freshwater wetlands to see songbirds and waterfowl and, if the day is sunny and warm, watch for snakes and turtles basking at the water's edge. If conditions are favorable, we'll take an early dinner break and head back afield for twilight, perhaps to hear calling frogs and witness the courtship display of woodcocks. With a lot of luck, we might find an owl. Tuesday will start with an optional early morning walk through field and forest. After a breakfast break, we'll work our way northward along the Atlantic coast, visiting beaches, vegetated dunes, and coastal waters that are traditionally the best spots for wintering water birds. While birds will our primary focus, we'll be watching for all wildlife as we also discuss the area's unique geography. *The program fee covers leadership only. There are many lodging options available in this area.*

## The Magic of Early Spring Woods

A. Wednesday, March 30—Little Bennett Park, MD

(1-3:30 pm)

B. Friday, April 15—Monocacy Aqueduct, MD

(10 am-12:30 pm)

Leaders: Marney Bruce and Anne DeNovo

Members \$30; nonmembers \$42

A stroll through an early spring woods in our region can be magical, with the colors and forms of unfolding leaves and stems of trees and shrubs catching the eye. In bottomland woods, there's the added delight of spring wildflowers underfoot. Our leaders can't wait to share two of their favorite places for this seasonal wonderment. At Little Bennett, you'll search for budbreak in woody plants and the unfolding of early spring wildflowers such as Bloodroot. Along the C&O Canal Towpath heading upriver from the Aqueduct, carpets of spring ephemerals and leafing-out trees will be celebrated. *Both walks are expected to cover 2-3 miles. The natural surface trails are wide and flat, but may be muddy and rutted.*

## Geology of Holmes Run

Saturday, April 2 (1-4 pm)

Leader: Joe Marx

Members \$33; nonmembers \$46

Alexandria, VA sits atop a wedding cake of overlapping and intersecting terraces created by the Potomac River and its ancestral streams. Holmes Run, a relatively large upland watercourse in the northwestern quadrant of the city, has sliced through the layers down to the bedrock on which they all rest. We will walk about 3 miles on good trails and mostly level ground through the Holmes Run Gorge, examining outcrops of granite, schist and partially formed sedimentary rock. The discussion will focus on the ancient origins of the various rock types we see and on changes that have happened within the gorge in historic time. An added bonus will be a miniature magnolia bog! *Note: The pace set and distance covered on our geology hikes is generally faster and farther than our usual naturalist's shuffle.*

## Sights and Sounds of Early Spring

Sunday, April 3 (2:30-8 pm)

Leader: Stephanie Mason

Members \$35; nonmembers \$49

Early spring wildlife activity will be the focus of our excursion to the Riley's Lock and Seneca Creek area along the Potomac River near Poolesville, MD. We'll walk up to a couple of miles along the C&O Canal Towpath, watching and listening for birds and all manner of seasonal wildlife, including mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and maybe even an early spring butterfly. We'll also search for early spring wildflowers along the River's rich floodplain habitats. As the sun begins to set, we'll look and listen for owls amidst the raucous breeding chorus of local frogs.



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## Bluebells and Budbreak at Boundary Bridge

**Friday, April 8 (9 am-1 pm)**

**Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley**

**Members \$35; nonmembers \$49**

We're delighted that the author of the award-winning book, *A Year in Rock Creek Park* and the critically acclaimed, *City of Trees*, will offer her 16th year of ANS nature walks in the country's oldest urban national park. Under her expert guidance, you will witness the annual floral miracle of Virginia bluebells, spring beauties, and trout lilies in the floodplain forest, while the leaves of tulip tree and American beech begin to spill from their buds. We'll hope to catch bloodroot, wild ginger, cut-leafed toothwort and other blooming spring ephemerals as we explore both floodplain and upland woods at a leisurely pace. Time permitting, we'll do a bit of "forest bathing." Throughout, we'll keep our eyes and ears open for belted kingfishers, wood ducks, migrant songbirds, and tiny spring peeper frogs. *Expect some uphill/downhill walking on natural surface trails which may be muddy and/or slippery.*

## Beginning Wildflower ID

**Saturday, April 9 (9 am-12:30 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

During April, spring wildflowers in the Washington area are abundant and dazzling! On this field class, based in the just-outside-the Beltway Carderock Recreation Area, we'll explore several short trails between the C&O Canal and the Potomac River. We'll work on developing the observational skills which are key to learning to recognize and ID wildflowers. As we're learning the names and niches of species such as Virginia bluebells, dutchman's breeches, toad trillium, and more, we'll take time to just enjoy their beauty. *Expect some rocky, uneven, and muddy terrain on the natural surface trails we'll use.*

## The Secret Lives of Spring Wildflowers

**Sunday, April 10 (2-4:30 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

They're lovely to behold. But their beauty belies the scrappy, survival strategies of our region's short-lived spring wildflowers. Coping with cold temperatures, species such as Trout Lily and Dutchman's Breeches race to complete their flowering and fruiting cycles before the brief window of spring sunlight is shut out by the unfolding forest canopy. Our Senior Naturalist spills some of their secrets on a roughly 1.5-mile round trip walk between Violettes and Riley's Locks along the Potomac's level C&O Canal Towpath.

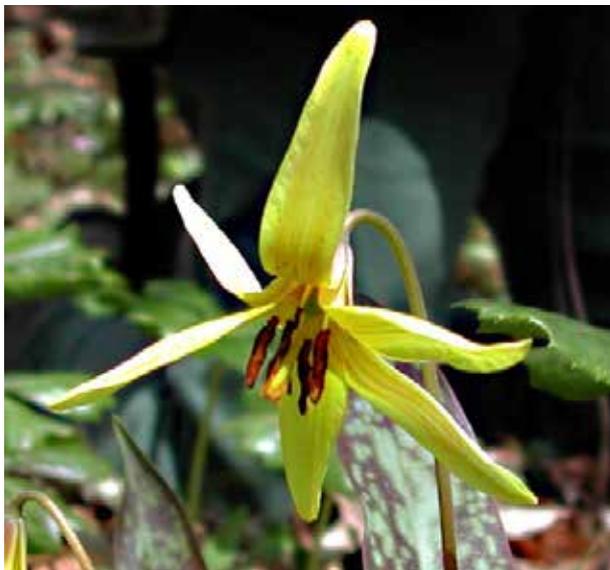


Photo by Dirk Harris

## Blooms in the Bottomland

**Friday, April 22 (10 am-12:30 pm)**

**Leader: Marney Bruce**

**Members \$30; nonmembers \$42**

Nothing could be finer on this Earth Day morning than a stroll through the bottomlands along the Potomac River. By this time in April, spring beauties, golden ragwort, Virginia bluebells, and more add bright color to the forest floor. Overhead, trees such as maples, elms, and cottonwood unspool their flowers and leaves. Our route—*mostly level, but possibly muddy and/or slippery*—will follow the River Trail from Great Falls, MD. We will move upriver along the floodplain, then return along the C&O Canal Towpath for *a total hike of a little over 2 miles.*



## Spring Fungus Walks

**A. Saturday, April 23 (10 am-12:30 pm)**

**B. Tuesday, April 26 (10 am-12:30 pm)**

**Leader: Serenella Linares**

**Each walk members \$33; nonmembers \$46**

As temperatures warm and spring rains fall, it's time to get introduced to some of our local fungi while learning more about their natural history and ecological functions. There's no better person to make this introduction than Serenella Linares, our Adult Education Director and expert mycologist. She'll help you find and appreciate the many shapes and colors of awakening fungi—from the almost microscopic to large shelf fungi. The setting for our outdoor walks will be the varied habitats of Patuxent Research Refuge (Main Tract) near Laurel, MD. *NOTE: the focus of these walks will be fungi's important and under-appreciated role in forest ecology, not the edibility of particular species of mushrooms.*

## Budbreak and Spring Wildflowers on Theodore Roosevelt Island

**Wednesday, April 27 (9:30 am-12:30 pm)**

**Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley**

**Members \$35; nonmembers \$49**

Join Melanie Choukas-Bradley, author of the award-winning new book, *Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island*, for an April exploration of Theodore Roosevelt Island, a 90-acre island in the Potomac that serves as a fitting memorial to our conservationist and naturalist 26th president—and Audubon Naturalist Society member! We'll witness the springtime foliage and flowers of the island's remarkable trees and April-blooming wildflowers of the upland woods, floodplain forest, swamp, and tidal marsh. Of course, we'll keep our eyes open for wood ducks, great blue herons, belted kingfishers, ospreys and bald eagles. Melanie will share details of the island's fascinating history during the walking exploration of this picturesque urban oasis. *Our circuit walk will traverse natural surface trails and boardwalk, both of which may be muddy and/or slippery.*

## Natural Heritage Hike: Calvert Cliffs State Park

**Saturday, April 30 (full-day field trip)**

**Members \$40; nonmembers \$56**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

While most visit Calvert Cliffs State Park for the marine fossils along its Chesapeake Bay beach, this park in southern Maryland offers rich natural history as well. We'll hike a circuit of 4 miles—out to the Bay and back—with stops along the way as we explore the coastal plain forests, marshland, and stream valley habitats of this protected area. We keep our eyes and ears open for wildlife, including birds, butterflies and other insects, and reptiles and amphibians, while admiring spring plant life both underfoot and overhead. *The Park's natural surface trails will be uneven and likely muddy with a mild hill or two.*



Photo by Stephanie Mason



Enjoy learning about Natural History topics from the comfort of your own home! Visit [www.anshome.org/naturalist-hour](http://www.anshome.org/naturalist-hour) for a complete listing of programs with area naturalists and scientists this spring. The time of the program doesn't work for you? No problem. Register and receive a recording of the talk by the end of the month. **Cost is \$12 for ANS members and \$15 for nonmembers.**

## Coexisting with Beavers: Why Does It Matter?

**Thursday, March 10 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Alison Zak**

Coexisting with beavers is dam important! In this program, Human-Beaver Coexistence Fund founder and director, Alison Zak, will discuss the benefits beavers provide to people, other species, and the landscape. Then she will highlight common 'beaver problems' and share effective, nonlethal strategies for managing these conflicts.

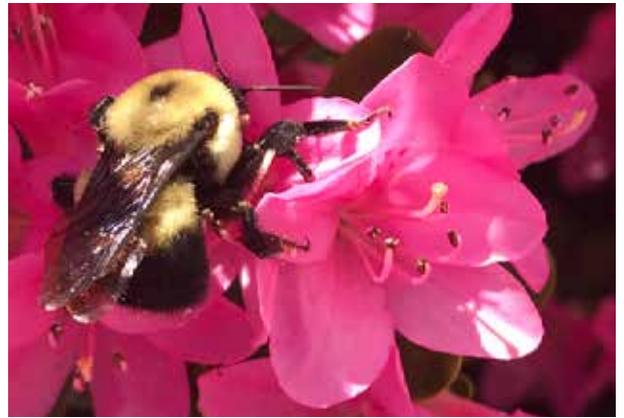


## Spring Wildflower Folklore and Natural History

**Thursday, March 17 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Alonso Abugattas**

Take a tour of our spring wildflowers with THE Capital Naturalist, Alonso Abugattas and learn about their natural history and identification. We will discuss wildflower folklore and uses of some of the most common iconic native species. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy Alonso's fantastic pictures and stories!



## Supporting Early Spring Pollinators

**Tuesday, March 29 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Clare Walker**

Early spring is a trying time for pollinators, with large temperature fluctuations and scarce floral resources. Join Dr. Clare Walker, Manager of Public Programs at Irvine Nature Center and Natural History Field Studies Instructor at ANS, to explore some of the species that brave spring conditions, their adaptations, and specialized diets. Find out when it is safe to start spring yard cleanup and how you can support pollinator species - from providing nectar-rich spring blooms to nesting habitat.

## The Dark White Forest: A Look Through the Trailblazing Eyes of the First Black Woman Forester

**Thursday, March 31 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Melody Starya Mobley**

Join the first Black woman forester, Melody Starya Mobley, in a look at her trajectory as a forester, the places that inspired the passion for her work, and the unique challenges encountered as she trailblazed her way through the industry. This presentation will serve as an exclusive preview to her movie "The Dark White Forest" to be released next year.

## Youth nature outings for grades K-5

# WOODEND FIELD TRIPS



Details at  
[anshome.org/woodend-field-trips](http://anshome.org/woodend-field-trips)

## Where in the World??

See page 30 for photos matching these memories.

A) Exotic Passionflowers always catch the eye of Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason when she leads our groups through the tropical wonderland of Costa Rica. We hope to resume our annual trips to Costa Rica in February 2023.

B) Nature Travel staffer Carol Hayes compares her “wingspan” to that of a Harpy Eagle during our Nature Travel trip to Panama. The rare Harpy Eagle—with a wingspan of 6.5 feet—is Panama’s National Bird.

C) This Armadillo was encountered by Tony Nastase on our trip to Central Florida. Next chance for one of these prehistoric-looking mammals on an ANS trip? With fingers crossed, we’re planning a South Texas trip for late fall 2022.

D) On our 2018 trip to Yellowstone National Park, eye-catching wildlife included bison, wolves, grizzly bears, and regal Trumpeter Swans. Smaller in size, but no less charismatic, was this Pika photographed by Chris Oves. Adapted to cold, high-elevation habitats of the American West, Pika are now threatened by climate changes due to global warming.



### Join the Legacy Society

You can Join ANS’s Legacy Society by including ANS in your estate plans.

This year, as ANS celebrates 125 years of connecting DC area residents

to nature, we ask you to consider sustaining your support long into the future. Your bequest to ANS will help serve the growing, rich diversity of this region, combat climate change, protect clean water, preserve our precious green spaces, and nurture the next generation of environmental leaders.

For more information contact Corinna Fisk at [corinna.fisk@anshome.org](mailto:corinna.fisk@anshome.org) or 301-652-9188 x31.



# Natural History Field Studies

This unique continuing education program for adults offers a comprehensive and stimulating view of our region's natural history and conservation issues. Taught at the college freshman level, these evening courses are open to anyone 18 years of age or older—nature professionals and beginning enthusiasts alike. A Certificate of Accomplishment in Natural History is awarded to those choosing to complete a required curriculum of 39 Continuing Education Units (CEUs), but anyone can enroll in any class for the sheer pleasure of learning.

Classes are currently being offered via online Zoom sessions with in-person field trips. For a complete list of the classes in the NHFS program, plus instructor bios, visit [anshome.org/nhfs](http://anshome.org/nhfs).

## Biodiversity

**NATH8211E, 1.5 CEUs**

**Zoom classes meet: Mondays, 6-8 pm**

**Zoom class schedule: April 25-May 23**

**Field Trips: Thursday, May 5 (Location TBD) & Saturday, June 4 (Patuxent River Park – Jug Bay Natural Area)**

**Members \$200, nonmembers \$250**

**Instructor: Clare Walker**

**[REGISTER ONLINE](#) or at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs)**

Everyone has heard that preserving biodiversity is important but what does that really mean when exploring the plants, animals, and fungi of the Mid-Atlantic? The word is usually encountered in articles about the loss of rainforests or coral reefs, but this class instead focuses on the biodiversity around us from our backyards to our regional parks.

Scientists have long debated how to precisely define and measure biodiversity. Is it the number of species? Is it the number of different functional roles being fulfilled by various species in an ecosystem? Is it the genetic diversity in a population? Is it the diversity of ecosystems?

This class will consider these questions in a practical way focusing on local habitats and species. Topics will include ideas such as: considering whether projects such as iNaturalist and eBird provide a good assessment of biodiversity, the role of parasites and fungi in species diversity, and places to visit to see local biodiversity hotspots and rare species. We will examine how biodiversity is measured, and you will be encouraged to try some of these while exploring a local park or your backyard. The class will also look at ways we can help support local biodiversity in our yards and beyond. Registration closes April 20.

## Wetland Ecology

**NATH8211E, 3 CEUs**

**Zoom classes meet: Tuesdays, 6-8 pm**

**Zoom class schedule: March 29-May 31**

**Field trip dates: Saturdays, April 9 (Battle Creek Cypress Swamp), April 24 (Jug Bay), May 14 (Suitland Bog)**

**Members \$350; nonmembers \$400**

**Instructor: Terry McTigue**

**[REGISTER ONLINE](#) or at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs)**

This course brings together information on factors such as movement of water, make up of sediments, seasonal patterns, and diversity of plants and animals to study how wetland habitats are structured and function. Major wetland types will be discussed with a focus on the diverse and rich habitats of the Mid-Atlantic region. Field trips will be on three Saturdays to sites within the greater DC Metro area to highlight the range of wetland types in the region. Registration closes March 23.



**Find required reading lists and instructor bios at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs).**

## Reptiles and Amphibians

NATH8276E, 3 CEUs

Zoom classes meet: Wednesdays, 6-8:15 pm, no class on April 20

Zoom class schedule: March 30-June 1

Field trip dates: Saturdays, April 16, May 8, May 21

Members \$350; nonmembers \$400

Instructor: Rachel Gauza

[REGISTER ONLINE](#) or at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs)

The course is an introduction to the study of reptiles and amphibians in the Mid-Atlantic region. Reptile and amphibian biology, ecology, behavior and natural history will be discussed. An emphasis will be placed on local species diversity, identification, and conservation. Students are expected to maintain a field notebook during field trips and to document their own herpetological searches. Registration closes March 23.



Do you want to read your Naturalist Quarterly online and reduce paper use and printing costs? If so, email [membership@anshome.org](mailto:membership@anshome.org) and ask to receive the Naturalist Quarterly by email.

## Butterflies of Spring

NATH8277E, 1.5 CEUs

Zoom classes meet: Thursdays, 6-8 pm

Zoom class schedule: May 5-June 2

Field trip dates: Saturdays, May 7, 14, 21 & 28; 10 am-3 pm (Sunday rain dates)

Members \$260; nonmembers \$310

Instructor: Rick Borchelt

[REGISTER ONLINE](#) or at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs)

The mid-Atlantic states have a rich diversity of spring-flying butterflies, some of which only fly early in the year and some of which have their first of several broods with a spring generation. May is the bridge between early spring butterflies and early summer species, so offers one of the best times to see some of both. But like many other flora and fauna, most butterflies are pretty strict habitat specialists. Join us as we explore mountain, meadow, woodland, and Coastal Plain habitats for butterflies characteristic of these ecoscapes, developing identification skills and a deeper understanding of butterfly ecology and behavior. Registration closes April 27.



## Registration Info for Natural History Field Studies Classes

Registration is now being handled completely online by the Audubon Naturalist Society (not the Graduate School USA) through our adult program registration system. Register for Natural History Field Studies classes at [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs). Questions? Contact [pam.oves@anshome.org](mailto:pam.oves@anshome.org).

**Refund Policy for NHFS classes:** ANS will provide you with a refund (minus a \$25 administration fee) if you cancel your enrollment no later than the day following the first class lecture. After this date, no refunds will be provided. In the event of a course cancellation due to insufficient enrollment or other events beyond our control, we will notify you as soon as possible and provide you with a full refund.

**Important Registration Dates:** If minimum student enrollment is not reached by one week before the scheduled start date, the course may be cancelled. Please see class descriptions for registration cut-off date.

# Adults in Nature Photos



## Walk Among the Giants

Enduring chilly temperatures and a 2.5-mile hike definitely paid off for these nature enthusiasts. Led by ANS Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason, participants of this seasonal walk along the Potomac River upstream of Great Falls, MD learned about various tree species, and even how to calculate the ages of some of these giants. They were also treated to a wealth of nature sightings including a number of plant species and birds like the great blue heron, ring-necked duck, mallard, and more. If you'd like to join us for an upcoming outdoor adventure, please visit [anshome.org/adults](https://anshome.org/adults). Photos by Ben Israel.





# Member and Staff Nature Photos



Whether they capture images during an ANS field trip or class, or they take photos during their own nature outings, we love it when members, staff, and volunteers share some of their great photos with us! Here are a few recent submissions. If you would like to share nature photos for publication or for sharing on social media, please email us at [hostmaster@anshome.org](mailto:hostmaster@anshome.org).

You can also tag us on social media at [@anstweets](#) on Twitter; [@ansnature](#) on Instagram; or [@AudubonNaturalistSociety](#) on Facebook.



Wilson's Snipe at Huntley Meadows by Naveen Naidu



Red-shouldered Hawk on the C&O Canal by Barbara Gordon



Eastern Screech-Owl at Blackwater NWR by Pam Oves



Ice at Ten Mile Creek by Carolyn Peirce

# Stream Science



## VOLUNTEER WATER QUALITY MONITORING

ANS volunteer water quality monitoring teams conduct stream assessments three to four times a year – once each spring, summer and fall, and optionally in winter. We are looking for volunteers who would:

- enjoy stepping into shallow streams
- like to work with others to capture, collect and identify aquatic macroinvertebrates
- think “that is so cool!” if someone pointed out a scud carrying its offspring in a brood pouch!

Our volunteers’ findings help us understand stream health and how conditions have changed over the past thirty years. Their data is a powerful tool in our advocacy to protect clean water in our region. To learn more, please visit <https://anshome.org/water-quality-monitoring/>.



Photo by Liz Guertin

## STREAM SCIENCE CLASSES

Our stream science classes are online! Learn about stream monitoring, factors that affect stream health and basic macroinvertebrate identification through our **introductory classes**:

- Stream Science Introduction Part 1: Healthy Stream Biology
- Stream Science Introduction Part 2: How to Read Your Stream

*The introductory classes are required for all volunteer monitors.*



Photo by Gregg Trilling

We also offer an **Advanced Macroinvertebrate Identification** series for those interested in learning aquatic macroinvertebrate identification to the family level. These classes are required for our volunteer monitoring team leaders, and offer naturalists, fly fishers, aquatic scientists and others an in-depth look at these fascinating creatures. The series includes classes about: Caddisflies; Beetles; Mayflies; Damselflies & Dragonflies; Stoneflies; Megaloptera, Hemiptera, Lepidoptera; and True Flies

**Cost for classes:** each class \$15 members / \$25 nonmembers / Free for ANS volunteers who have monitored with the WQM program in the last two years.

For more information and to register, please visit <https://anshome.org/water-quality-monitoring/>.

## CREEK CRITTERS®

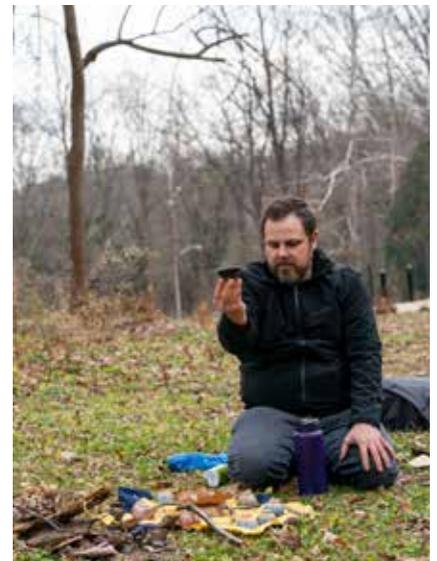
ANS’s free CREEK CRITTERS® app will help you, your family and friends find and identify aquatic macroinvertebrates, and learn about the health of your local stream. For more information, please visit <https://anshome.org/creek-critters/>. And don’t forget to check out **@anscreekcritters** on Instagram for photos, videos and brief posts about these fascinating critters.

# Families in Nature



## Winter Solstice Walk at Woodend

Certified nature and forest therapy guide Josh Schwartz led participants on an immersive forest bathing walk through Woodend Nature Sanctuary on the winter solstice. Under the setting sun on the shortest day of the year, the group peacefully enjoyed the change of seasons. Inspired by the Japanese practice of “Shinri-Yoku,” forest bathing is a research-based practice designed to promote health and wellbeing through immersion in natural settings. Find out about upcoming forest bathing outings and other opportunities to explore Woodend at [anshome.org/woodend-tours](https://anshome.org/woodend-tours). Photos by Ben Israel





# Unplug and EXPLORE

at Woodend Nature Sanctuary



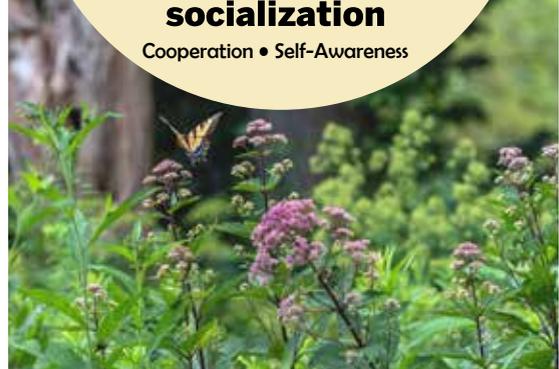
**DID YOU KNOW?**

Playing in nature helps children with

**cognitive development**  
Creativity • Problem Solving

**emotional growth**  
Stress Reduction • Self-Confidence

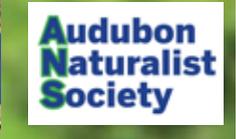
**socialization**  
Cooperation • Self-Awareness



To find programs and events that connect your family to nature, visit [anshome.org](https://anshome.org) and click Children & Families on our homepage!



**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**



# Nature Travel

ANS's Nature Travel program offers our members and friends opportunities to search for wildlife and explore the wonders of nature at places outside the mid-Atlantic region. Group size is typically limited to 15 people, and many trips fill early. Call Carol Hayes at the ANS travel desk at 301-652-9188 x10 or email carol.hayes@anshome.org for complete itineraries and registration information or visit ANShome.org/travel.

## Nature Travel Update

As much as we'd love to join our enthusiastic travelers in the return of our Nature Travel program, we have paused our scheduling for now and remain cautiously optimistic that we will be offering trips again in the fall of 2022 (South Texas) and resume our popular trips to Costa Rica in 2023. But please continue to check our website, eNews, and social media for any destinations we may offer in the meantime.

## Where in the World??

Where has ANS recently travelled? Well, Covid has kept us "at home" since February 2020, but we thought you might enjoy guessing "what's happening and where?" in the travel pix below. Go to page 21 for the answers.



a



c



b



d

## Volunteer Corner

**An occasional feature that highlights the many volunteers and volunteer opportunities at ANS**

by Mitch Greene, Volunteer Coordinator  
mitch.greene@anshome.org

The cold weather is practically behind us, I can almost hear the photosynthesis process coming online in the buds of trees; Spring is upon us, and it is time to return to longer days and fewer layers!

This quarter, I'd like to introduce you to Rob Bannister, a MD and VA Master Naturalist and recent graduate of the Natural History Field Studies course. Rob volunteers with ANS from Sperryville, VA where he and his partner, Ryan, recently moved. A retired financial consultant, Rob currently serves as the Administrative Director of the Rappahannock Nature Camp. Beyond volunteering with ANS, one of the things I find most interesting about Rob is his time spent as a bellringer. Literally. Rob is a "member of a band that rings the tower bells at Washington National Cathedral and the Old Post Office Tower."



Rob Bannister works with Cathy Wiss during a stream studies field lesson.

When I asked him about why he chose to become a volunteer with ANS his response was one that resonated with me, especially lately when "doom scrolling" has become a word. Rob replied that, "Environmental protection is a passion of mine, and I want to help engender and nurture this passion in others. Volunteering at ANS provides me opportunities to do so. When I volunteer at ANS, I'm also gaining new skills and knowledge that make me a more effective conservationist, and I feel uplifted by working on a team with fellow volunteers with a shared purpose. It's an antidote for the dread I feel from reading about environmental degradation in the news!"

Rob has gotten his shot-in-the-arm from quite a number of our volunteer roles. Working with Bradley Simpson on a comprehensive forest survey, helping as an environmental educator with our school programs (pre-pandemic), and serving as a garden and habitat steward, a naturalist interpreter, and a data collector for the Woodend use survey, Rob's curiosity and willingness to do what needs doing makes him a good example of who our volunteers are. You are people who help keep me humble and remind me, daily, of the good that we do and of all that we can accomplish.

I like to know what people remember about ANS and when I asked Rob he described that moment that all educators dream of—the one that keeps them coming back every day:

"As a volunteer environmental educator with ANS's school programs, I helped preschool children handle live worms and hissing cockroaches. In a matter of minutes, I witnessed how their fear gave way to curiosity and then gentleness and care as they cupped the animals in their hands and gazed with wonder as the little creatures moved across their forearms. It was like watching the birth of a new conservationist, one by one."

Rob, like some of our other volunteers, has taken the knowledge gained as an ANS volunteer and used it as a way to make a difference in his own life. He and his partner have begun the process of "rewilding" their property by removing nonnative invasive plants and replacing them with native plants. The result, so far? "The increase in wildlife I've witnessed combined with the skills in nature observation I've honed as an ANS volunteer have increased immeasurably my enjoyment of my own home."

Thank you Rob, for *everything* you do for ANS. We truly appreciate your curiosity and are glad that you've been able to take what you've learned far afield. Rob is one example, among many, of how curiosity and willingness are so beneficial. To us, to himself and to others. Thank you to all of you who are curious and give back.

# Naturally Latinos Conference 4

NATURALLY  
**LATINOS** 4  
CONFERENCE

**Otro mundo es posible**  
Another world is possible



**In the face of towering environmental threats, the 4th Naturally Latinos Conference (NLC4) is promoting a bold and hopeful message: Otro mundo es posible - Another world is possible - and we can make that possibility a reality by working together.**

"Our planet is dealing with serious environmental challenges," says NLC4 Co-Chair Serenella Linares. Serenella is also Director of Adult Education at ANS. "The Naturally Latinos Conference recognizes that all communities need to be part of the climate solution. The Conference is the place for Latine nature advocates to come together, center our voices, and celebrate the Hispanic community and our allies."

The five-day NLC4 Conference will be held online from Tuesday, March 22 - Thursday, March 24. On Friday, March 25, the conference will be held in-person, indoors at the Silver Spring Civic Center. A livestream option will be available for Friday's conference events. Saturday, March 26 will feature several outdoor nature experiences. Online-only tickets and "hybrid" tickets (online plus live) are available at [anshome.org/naturally-latinos](https://anshome.org/naturally-latinos).

"We will be gathering an amazing community of thinkers and leaders in the environment," says Ana Luz Porzecanski, a keynote speaker for the conference. Porzecanski, an evolutionary biologist, conservation scientist, and educator who has worked around the globe, is Director of the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History. "The theme of the conference is Otro mundo es posible/Another world is possible, and I can't think of a more important conversation for us to be having right now."



Keynote speaker Ana Luz Porzecanski

**Naturally Latinos and its sister conference Taking Nature Black are key examples of ANS's proactive efforts to engage a larger and more diverse community of people who treasure the natural world and work to preserve it. Through our conferences, outreach and education programs, and advocacy priorities, ANS is working hard to reach out and to listen to communities long-underrepresented in the environmental movement.**

"For too long, the mainstream environmental movement has failed to connect with this source of power and passion," says NLC4 Co-Chair and ANS Conservation Director Eliza Cava. "The time is now to work on fixing that error and healing a great divide."

That view is backed up by research. A 2010 study titled Race, Ethnicity and Public Responses to Climate Change conducted by the Yale Project on Climate Change and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication found, "It is commonly believed that global climate change is primarily a concern of only upper and middle class whites, while minorities are focused only on local issues of environmental justice...these assumptions are often wrong." The study found that Latinos, African Americans and other people of color were often "the strongest supporters of climate and energy policies and were also more likely to support these policies even if they incurred greater costs."

"It is vitally important that concerted efforts be made to engage these communities in both mitigation and adaptation efforts. As report writer Angela Park argues, climate change must become "everybody's movement," the report concluded.



NLC4 Co-Chairs Eliza Cava and Serenella Linares

"Naturally Latinos has always been an affirming place for Latino environmental professionals to come together," Serenella adds. "The conference is a place where we can create a community, network together, and see ourselves represented in a way that is unique, especially in the environmental sector."

NLC4 sessions will include "Land Acknowledgement & Indigeneity in the Latinx Community," "Hecho por Manos Verdes, The Role of Latinos in the Watershed Restoration Movement," and "Urban Agriculture: Growing, Sharing, Learning in Community" among other important topics. You can view the complete agenda at [anshome.org/naturally-latinos](https://anshome.org/naturally-latinos).

"We can and we must create another world. We can be intentional, together, at this crucial point in time, to energize our community using our voices and our values," Serenella says.

Please join us! Learn how even when times are challenging, we can look forward to a new world of possibilities. ¡Otro mundo es posible!

**Thank you to all of our conference sponsors, including lead sponsors**



Thank you to our planning committee:

Abel Olivo (Defensores de la Cuenca) • Ana Arriaza (Montgomery Parks)

Antonia Bookbinder (Prince George's Parks and Recreation) • Brenda Perez Amador (DC DOEE)

Joe Toolan (Chesapeake Bay Trust) • Jorge Bogantes Montero (Anacostia Watershed Society)

Rita Peralta (Fairfax Parks) • Josefina Doumbia

Isabel Layton (Chesapeake Conservancy) • Ramon Palencia-Calvo (Maryland League of Conservation Voters)

Denisse Guitarra (ANS) • Lin Orrin (ANS)



twitter.com/ANStweets

# Restoration

## The Work Never Ends

There have been many amazing changes at Woodend, but the work is far from done. Our stream and trail project has laid the groundwork for future restoration within Woodend's forests. Beyond the good start on restoration that our Nature for All project launched, staff and volunteers have many opportunities to continue to contribute to healthier habitats at Woodend.

Tangles of multiflora rose, patches of bush honeysuckle, and carpets of English ivy still remain. This winter, volunteers have helped staff remove a large patch of multiflora rose near our pond with plans to replace this prickly non-native shrub with 8 native understory tree and shrub species.

Before the holidays, volunteers also helped in planting over 100 native tree

seedlings that were graciously donated by neighbors and members of ANS. The Restoration team is always looking for more native plants to add to the booming ecosystem of Woodend's forest. If you have tree seedlings sprouting in your yard, please feel free to donate them to Woodend and contribute to a healthier forest. Priority species include oaks and hickories, but many more species will be accepted. Please email Restoration Manager, Bradley Simpson, for questions and to organize a donation at [bradley.simpson@anshome.org](mailto:bradley.simpson@anshome.org).



*Forest understory planting of canopy tree seedlings donated by ANS members and volunteers. Photo by Bradley Simpson.*

## Woodend Tours

Returning with the warm weather this spring are another selection of wonderful walks led by ANS staff and volunteers. Dates and times for our walks can be found at <https://anshome.org/events-calendar/>. We hope to see you on one at Woodend this spring! For more information, please contact Restoration Manager, Bradley Simpson, at [bradley.simpson@anshome.org](mailto:bradley.simpson@anshome.org).

On the first Saturday of each month, families with young children can join our Master Naturalist volunteers on morning strolls around Woodend. These **Family Walks at Woodend** are designed to communicate the wonders of Woodend's habitats for young audiences.

**Saturday Morning Bird Walks** will occur once a month on the second Saturday, providing an opportunity to view and appreciate the birds around Woodend. These walks will introduce participants to birding, including the basics of binocular usage. With spring migration approaching, there will be many opportunities to see birds as they travel north for the summer.

Mindfulness walks through **Forest Bathing** are also available and led by leaders from A Greener Mind. These walks will feature a Mother's Day walk in May and an evening summer solstice walk in June, as well as a morning mindfulness walk in April.

Finally, restoration staff members, Bradley Simpson, Alice Sturm and Mitch Greene will lead educational walks focused on **Notable Trees**, **Native Plant Gardens**, and **Natural Habitats** of Woodend, respectively. Staff-led private tours on these subjects are also available and can be scheduled by visiting the Woodend Tours page on our website <https://anshome.org/woodend-private-tour/>.

## Spring Garden Education Workshops

All workshops will take place outside in a tented classroom. Register at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults).

### Square Foot Habitat Gardening

Sunday, March 27 (10 am-12:30 pm)

Members \$30; nonmembers \$42

Learn how to make the most of every square foot in your garden for wildlife benefit. Habitat is a precious commodity in our urban region, especially for wildlife stressed by climate change. But you can make a difference, even in a small space by packing it with food, shelter, water and nesting opportunities.

### Designing a Native Plant Garden

Tuesdays, April 5, 12 and 19 (1-4 pm)

Member \$100; nonmembers \$125

Learn how to plan your eco-friendly native plant garden from the soil up! In this three-session class you'll gain the necessary skills to inventory existing conditions, create a concept plan that addresses things like stormwater flow, and build a plant list that will create habitat for insects, birds and other fauna.

### Growing Native Edible Plants

Tuesday, May 17 (1-3:30 pm)

Members \$30; nonmembers \$42

Native plants aren't just for the birds! Learn about options for your garden that can put food on your own table, while also contributing to a healthy ecosystem.

## ANS Garden Consultations

Make the most of the spring gardening season with an on-site consultation with ANS Garden Outreach Associate Alice Sturm.

- Defining sunny, shady, dry and wet areas in your garden
- Identifying your existing plants and recommending additions
- A written report of next steps to improve habitat or start a food garden
- A map of your property showing garden conditions and recommendations

Schedule Your Yard/Garden Consultation for \$125 at <https://anshome.org/woodend-garden/>

## ANS welcomes new Garden Programs Manager Alice Sturm

Despite stepping into her new role as Garden Programs Manager less than a month ago, Alice Sturm actually has a long history with ANS.

"I was a camper at ANS as a child," Alice explained. "My mom has always been a fan!"

In fact, Alice says it was during a nature walk through Woodend Nature Sanctuary that she learned about this opportunity to lead the garden program.

"I love helping people connect to the outdoors in ways they didn't before," says Alice, who earned her master's degree in landscape architecture. Her experience includes organic farming, designing nature play spaces, and residential and institutional landscaping design.

"Alice has such a wealth of experience with native plant gardening, as well as management of natural habitats," says ANS Deputy Director for Programs Alison Pearce. "I look forward to all of the creative ways that she will empower people to do better by the environment in their own green spaces."

Alice will continue and expand on the native gardening education and consultation work previously led by Jenny Brown, who retired earlier this year. Over the years, Jenny worked in both the Education and Restoration departments, sharing her green thumb and warm heart with children and adults alike. Jenny founded the "Learning Garden" at Woodend and grew several very popular garden education programs.

"We wish her the very best for a happy retirement, but we know she won't be able to stay away for long," Alison says. "We feel sure that Jenny will be around this spring making sure that all of her botanical "babies" are thriving in the Woodend gardens."



Garden Programs Manager Alice Sturm



# 42nd Bloomin' Birdathon



**The ANS Bloomin' Birdathon is back for its 42nd year! The much-anticipated event is our longest-running and perhaps most rewarding annual fundraiser.**

"Counting spring flowers and bird species is such a fun way to make discoveries, and a great way to support ANS," says ANS Director of Development Corinna Fisk. "I'm excited to participate in an event with such a long tradition of connecting people to nature in the DMV region."

The Bloomin' Birdathon is like a walk-a-thon or bike-a-thon. Instead of asking for a donation pledge of \$1 per mile walked or biked for example, counters seek pledges based on the number of bird species and/or flowers ("blooms") they spot over a maximum of 24 hours between April 15 and May 31. Participants can count alone or as part of a team. And if you don't want to count anything but you still want to help, you can simply make a donation. Funds raised will support ANS conservation, education, and restoration programs across the DMV.

For Corinna, who joined ANS last November, this will be her first Bloomin' Birdathon and she hopes to attract other newcomers to this important event.

"Whether it's to pause and take a closer look at nature around you, or for the thrill of friendly competition, or both, I hope this year's Bloomin' Birdathon brings people who love nature together to celebrate spring and join the count," she says.

Our Birdathon web page has forms and tips to get you ready for this year's count. Avid birders, birding newbies, bloomers, and folks who simply want to donate can visit [anshome.org/birdathon](http://anshome.org/birdathon) for details.

The formidable birding duo of ANS Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason and ANS Office Manager Pam Oves is historically one of the Bloomin' Birdathon's most successful teams in terms of both identifying different bird species and raising much-needed funds to benefit ANS conservation and education initiatives.



Pam Oves and Stephanie Mason



# April 15 - May 31, 2022



## [anshome.org/birdathon](https://anshome.org/birdathon)

"One of my favorite memories from a Birdathon was just last year," Pam recalls. "Stephanie and I, being creatures of habit, visit the same spots each year. At Riley's Lock along the C&O Canal, we stumbled upon what could be called a "Warblerpalooza": Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, American Redstart, Blackpoll and a couple more warblers all within a hundred yards or so of each other! That's one of my favorite things about birding – the unexpected surprises and delights on every nature outing that can't be predicted."

However, despite her team's consistent fundraising success, Pam admits that like many people, she is personally shy about soliciting donations.

"But when I ask my own family members and friends, I think they know the joy I experience while birding and they are happy to support the Birdathon because of that," Pam explains. "It doesn't matter what the cause is, if you are enthusiastic and excited about a cause, most people are happy to support you."



**Because the ANS Bloomin' Birdathon supports conservation advocacy, nature education and restoration, counters and donors alike are helping advance our mission to encourage more people across the region to enjoy, learn about and desire to protect the natural world.**

"We're working hard to be more conscious and intentional about making sure we are providing access to nature for everyone," Corinna says. "The Blooming' Birdathon encourages people to engage with nature wherever they might be in support of nature for all."



Bird images by Jane Gamble

**MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE CONTRIBUTIONS  
November 2021-January 2022**

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**Lisa Alexander**  
Leslie Weber

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## Remembering Cris Fleming to honor her life and love of nature

A little more than a year ago, our ANS community suffered a deep loss with the passing of our dear friend, Cristol (Cris) Fleming. For many years, Cris taught plant identification in the Natural History Field Studies Program and led hundreds of field trips for ANS, the Maryland and Virginia Native Plant Societies, and many other organizations. Cris had a deep and tender love of nature and she generously shared her vast botanical knowledge with others.

We hope to commemorate Cris at Woodend Nature Sanctuary with a memorial bench located beside the new, wheelchair-accessible, permeable nature trail along Clean Drinking Stream. A plaque with Cris's name and a few words of memorial appreciation will adorn her bench. We invite you to celebrate Cris's legacy by donating toward this special memorial.

Your donation, in any amount, will help us reach our goal of \$15,000, and we look forward to inviting you to come celebrate with us when the bench is unveiled.

To contribute to a bench in honor of Cris Fleming, and read tributes or share memories of Cris, please visit: <https://anshome.org/cris-fleming-memorial/>.

Donations can also be mailed to: "Audubon Naturalist Society" (and note, For Cris Fleming) to: Audubon Naturalist Society, Attn: Corinna Fisk, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.



## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Education programs are held at Woodend, the Audubon Naturalist Society's 40-acre Headquarters, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815, unless otherwise noted. All education programs except Nature Travel have online registration. You will be notified immediately if the program is full; otherwise, confirmation letters will be emailed 1-2 weeks before the scheduled program.

Lectures are held at our Woodend Sanctuary, and field trip transportation is by private vehicle or carpool unless otherwise noted. Most programs are limited to 16 participants and also have a minimum enrollment, so early registration is important to ensure that programs run. Unless otherwise noted, weekend adult foray program fees do not include meals or lodging.

Because our programs rely on registration fees for funding, we have adopted this policy:

- Cancellations must be made at least six working days before the beginning of the program to be eligible for a credit to your account, less a \$5 administrative fee.
- If an adult foray is cancelled by ANS due to low enrollment, you will receive a full refund. If a weather-related concern or another issue outside of ANS's control forces a cancellation, you will receive a full credit to your account.
- Nature travel programs have different cancellation policies, explained on the information sheet sent on request.

ANS is committed to addressing problems when they occur. Program participants are encouraged to bring problems or concerns of any kind directly to the staff member in charge of the program. Staff members will try to resolve the problem immediately or as soon as reasonably possible. If staff is unable to do so, they are expected to bring the problem to the attention of their immediate supervisor or member of the Senior Management Team, who will take responsibility for seeking a resolution. Program participants are welcome to bring unresolved problems or concerns to the attention of the Executive Director. The Executive Director's decision on resolution of the problem is final.

Do you want to read your Naturalist Quarterly online and reduce paper use and printing costs? If so, email [membership@anshome.org](mailto:membership@anshome.org) and ask to receive the Naturalist Quarterly by email.



**Master Naturalist  
Training at Woodend  
Sanctuary!**



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Master Naturalist Application opens on April 15.

The Audubon Naturalist Society is pleased to partner with UMD Extension to offer Maryland Master Naturalist training. This program engages citizens as stewards of Maryland's ecosystems through science-based education and volunteer service. Master Naturalists are our go-to volunteers on whom we rely greatly. Some have become committee and even board members. If you're already a volunteer and want more, please consider becoming a MD Master Naturalist. If you're interested in becoming a highly-qualified volunteer and spending time outside with our environmental education, conservation or restoration departments, please apply.

2022 Fall Training Program:  
Tuesday through Thursday, 10 am - 1 pm  
September 13 - November 11

Learn more and apply online at [anshome.org/master-naturalist](https://anshome.org/master-naturalist) (accepting applications from April 15-May-15).

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Please recycle this paper.

**SAVE THE DATE** **After Dark**

**Our Wildly Fun  
Fundraising Party  
returns June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Watch for details at  
[anshome.org/after-dark](https://anshome.org/after-dark)