

AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY



# Naturalist Quarterly

Winter 2022

ANSHOME.ORG



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

#### GROUNDS 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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**COVER** Eastern gray squirrel by Jane Gamble

## From the Director

### 'Tis the Engagement Season

As many of you know, we rely on our event rental business to generate revenue that supports our important mission work in environmental education, conservation and restoration. After a long pandemic hiatus, when little to no mission revenue was earned, it's gratifying to see our rental business come back to life, and watch happy newlyweds start their lives together at our beautifully restored Woodend Nature Sanctuary. With the holidays upon us, it's also engagement season. And as rings encircle fingers, the number of couples coming to Woodend will soar, as will support for our work across the DC metro region.

But it's your engagement with our mission work that has helped ANS weather the lasting impacts of the pandemic and embrace a bold new future for the organization. Your participation and collaboration make us better at everything we do! From volunteers who eradicate invasive plants so that native plant communities can thrive and support wildlife at our nature sanctuaries, to the trained Master Naturalist volunteers who lead tours of our restoration work and serve as ambassadors at community outreach events, to our water quality monitors who champion clean water around the region, to our Action Network activists



who hold decision makers accountable for getting environmental policies right – your engagement makes our mission work come to life.

I marvel at all the ways our members and supporters contribute to the vibrant outreach and impact ANS has on people and nature in our region. I tip my hat to our financial supporters who made it possible for us to complete the wheelchair accessible nature trail and our glorious stream restoration (see page 36). Our generous, visionary and engaged funders made it possible for us to survive and thrive despite the lingering grip of Covid-19.

This year I am especially thankful for your willingness to engage with us in new ways – in virtual and hybrid classes, through Zoom meetings and by shopping at the online shop. We are learning together and making ANS stronger as a result. And it was your engagement and thoughtful deliberation that led to the decision to change our name (see page 31) to strengthen our ability to fulfill our longstanding mission to inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to appreciate, understand and protect the natural world.

ANS will continue to be an environmental leader in the region. Our message is clear - **nature needs all of us**, working together, to tackle the biggest environmental threat we've ever faced, climate change. And I have confidence that our engaged membership will grow in number and strength in the New Year. Thank you for staying close, staying committed to our mission work, and for giving generously at year end to support the good work we do!

With gratitude for your engagement and best wishes for a season filled with time spent in nature,



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Naturalist Frank Sanford leads a tour along the new accessible trail during the October 6th Grand Opening of the restored Woodend Nature Sanctuary. Photo by Ben Israel. See more photos on page 36.

## Nature Needs All of Us

**ANS members have so many accomplishments to be proud of over our 124 year history. Equally gratifying, we can confidently look forward to the next 125 years with optimism thanks to the seeds we've been planting. By acting on the absolute certainty that Nature Needs All of Us, our long-standing commitment to our mission to inspire all people in our region to enjoy, learn about, and work to protect nature is stronger than ever.**

### Making Nature Accessible

Our restored Woodend Nature Sanctuary is a shining example. The thought, planning, and execution of the restoration have produced a model for environmental best practices. Our restored stream, rain gardens and permeable parking lots help reduce pollution into Rock Creek, the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. We've planted thousands of new trees, shrubs and understory plants to increase the biodiversity of our forest and stream valley. And wildlife is taking notice! Tadpoles populate our pond again. We've spotted foxes, woodchucks, sandpipers and wild turkeys, all taking refuge in Woodend's rejuvenated habitats.

And now, more people are able to take notice. Thanks to the addition of a quarter-mile accessible trail, visitors using wheelchairs, walkers and strollers can now enjoy all the habitats -- forest, meadows, stream and pond -- at Woodend.

The new trail is already helping us expand partnerships with organizations that serve people with disabilities and veterans, including The Wounded Warrior Project, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, and Knollwood, a DC-based community of senior federal and military retirees. Programs have included birding walks, tours of the Woodend restoration projects, forest bathing, and workshops on managing chronic illness.

And this is only the beginning. After years of perseverance and planning, we finally have approval to install a wheelchair-accessible Nature Play Space that will encourage cooperative play and learning among children of all abilities.



"A lot of the trails that I've been on, the slopes make it difficult for a handicapped person to negotiate. So, I really appreciate the thought that was given to gentle slopes for people like me," Robert Isackson told FOX5 DC. Photo by Ben Israel.



Veterans from the Wounded Warrior Project joined us for a Woodend birding walk. Photo by Mitch Greene.

## Engaging Diverse Nature Lovers

For years, we've been developing and improving a model for reaching traditionally underserved communities. Our landmark conferences, Naturally Latinos and Taking Nature Black, are among our more widely-recognized initiatives. Both conferences gather diverse environmental professionals to share their knowledge, network and shed light on critical issues including environmental justice. Attendance has grown exponentially.

Less widely-known but building steadily in communities across our region, are our partnerships at the neighborhood level. Our conservation advocates in DC, Virginia, and Maryland are helping connect people of all ages to nature in their communities. We also help empower grassroots spokespeople to effectively hold decision-makers accountable for enacting land use and environmental policies that serve and safeguard these communities. In Fairfax County, VA, for example, ANS and partners successfully championed a ban on using plastic bags for leaf litter collection and passage of a brand-new plastic bag fee.

## Nurturing Future Environmental Stewards

Thanks to its outstanding reputation and memorable hands-on nature experiences (like the Caterpillar Road Show features on page 14), our GreenKids school program continues to deliver free environmental education lessons in public schools. Our naturalist educators were recently invited to eight schools in Loudoun County, VA's Sterling area to deliver hands-on nature lessons outside. In response to the pandemic, we also adapted to provide digital nature lessons and materials, and we have offered materials in Spanish.

**Nature needs you. Nature needs me. Nature Needs All of US to meet the region's environmental challenges now and into the future. We will continue to be thoughtful and innovative in our efforts to expand the community of people who treasure the natural world and work to preserve it!**



Our Water Keepers of Little Hunting Creek program teams with social service agencies serving the Creekside and Colchester housing communities in Fairfax County, VA. In partnership with United Communities, we've hosted several nature programs including this tree planting event. Support from Community Foundation of Northern Virginia allowed this project to get off to a fantastic start this year. Photo by Ben Israel.



We invited landscape professionals to a free, bilingual workshop on sustainable landscaping to encourage the use of native plants and environmentally-friendly practices. The training was delivered in English and Spanish in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals program with funding from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (through the Montgomery County Water Quality Protection Fund). Photo by Ben Israel.



CELEBRATE THE SEASON  
WITH GIFTS FROM  
THE NATURALIST SHOP  
AT WOODEND!

Books • Binoculars • Birdseed  
Games & Puzzles for All Ages  
Palm-Free Soaps • Habitat-Friendly Coffee  
Cards & Calendars • Much More!

Holiday Shopping Hours:  
Monday-Saturday • 11am-3pm  
and Online Anytime!  
[anshome.org/naturalist-shop/](https://anshome.org/naturalist-shop/)

## Staff Recommendations for the Holidays from the Naturalist Shop

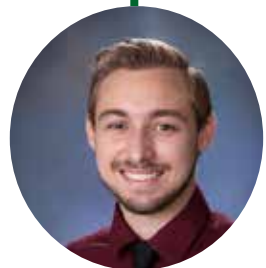


My pick would be the *Secrets of Winter* (but also all of the Shine-a-Light books). The Shine-a-Light book series has been a favorite for the preschool classes I teach here at ANS. The *Secrets of Winter* story uses a flashlight to uncover clues about what animals do in the cold months of the year. These stories provide nature knowledge woven into narratives that let children experiment with cause and effect, as well as hypothesize about what pictures are hidden under the light of the story pages. They are my go-to present for any kiddo ages 3 to 8 years old!

Amelia McLaughlin, Preschool Teacher

The ANS shop is a hidden gem! From ID books to magnifying glasses and hiking trail maps, there are so many items in the shop that can help make your nature experience so much better. Two of my favorite purchases are my companion binoculars: Zeiss Conquest and Nikon Monarch. Matt, our shop manager, is extremely helpful and knowledgeable about optics. He let me try out different pairs and gave me very good advice. I even got a small pair (Opticron -Trail Finder) that I always keep in my car or take on my bike rides. You never know when nature will surprise you!

Gina Ghertner, Environmental Educator



As a curious naturalist and plant enthusiast, I am always on the lookout for books that will expand my knowledge and understanding of ecosystems throughout the DMV. There are many wonderful field guides and plant dichotomous keys at the ANS Shop. *Eastern Woodland Wildflowers & Trees: 350 Plants Observed at Sugarloaf Mountain Maryland*, *Field Guide to the Piedmont*, *The Trees in My Forest*, and *Muenschler's Keys to Woody Plants* are a few of my favorites. It is difficult to read a good book without a cup of coffee. Luckily, the shop also has amazing, locally-sourced coffee and really fun mugs to go with it! Everything you need for a good morning or evening reading session can be found at ANS.

Bradley Simpson, Restoration Manager

My sister-in-law appreciates simple, natural beauty (she used to teach about the Shakers at Greenfield Village in MI), so a pair of earrings from the Naturalist Shop was the perfect birthday present for her. My four-year-old granddaughter loves animals—seeing, petting, and feeding them, and hearing stories about them. She joyfully welcomes a nature book from the shop!

Lin Orrin, Grant Writer



# Conservation



## Policy and Advocacy News

Photo by Ben Israel.

Ronnie Webb, Executive Director of The Green Scheme, poses for a portrait in front of our Ward 8 Water Watchers sign. Oxon Run, the stream that runs through the heart of Ward 8, is expected to enter planning for a stream restoration and new park master plan next year. ANS is excited to partner with The Green Scheme, Friends of Oxon Run, and many others to help heal this stream and reconnect it to its park and community.

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### Regional/National

**Infrastructure Week Finally Happened:** The infrastructure bill that passed both houses of Congress on November 5 contains critical funding for many of ANS's top regional priorities: \$66 billion for rail to help Amtrak make repairs and expand service (especially valuable to us along the Northeast Corridor); local investments in transit including Metro and Bus Rapid Transit lines; \$65 billion to rebuild the electric grid and expand renewable energy generation; \$55 billion to upgrade drinking water, stormwater, and waste water infrastructure; and billions more to make our infrastructure more resilient to climate change as well as funding to clean up environmentally hazardous sites.

### Maryland

**Thank you for raising your voice against the Beltway/ I-270 Highway Expansion!** [ANS testified against the project at the SDEIS virtual public hearing on Nov 1st, 2021](#), and 49 activists used our tool to send their own letters. Thank you! We continue to demand more and better transit alternatives. Later this year, the project's Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be issued. Check out our [ANS Blog](#) for ways to get involved—we're not done fighting this bad idea yet!

### Washington, DC

**The Decision to Redevelop Poplar Point:** Located along the Anacostia River in Ward 8 bounded by South Capitol Street, I-295, and the 11th Street bridges, [Poplar Point](#) is one of the last great urban redevelopment opportunities on the East Coast. This 130-acre site is currently home to active National Park Service (NPS) and US Park Police (USPP) facilities but is largely unused. The site is slated to be transferred to DC from the Federal Government. There is much excitement surrounding increased access to pedestrian walkways, bicycle trails, wetlands, natural areas, recreational use and more with the redevelopment. ANS and our partners will provide input to the process and let members and supporters know how you can help.

### Virginia

**5 Cent Plastic Bag Fee instituted across NoVa:** On September 14, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to charge a five-cent tax on disposable plastic bags provided by retailers in grocery stores, convenience stores and drugstores. The City of Alexandria and Arlington County followed suit in also adopting ordinances for their locales. These fees, which only apply to people taking plastic bags in stores, will go into effect as of January 1, 2022. Loudoun and Prince William Counties will be discussing ordinances in the coming months.



## Community Outreach Programs

ANS partners with local community-serving organizations to grow a network of empowered environmental leaders who feel connected to their local natural spaces and gain the skillsets and confidence to represent neighborhood priorities to decision-makers.



A family shows off their caddisfly artwork at the Waterkeepers of Little Hunting Creek Day of Action. Photo by Ben Israel.

**Water Keepers of Little Hunting Creek (Fairfax County, VA):** We wrapped up our first year with a “Day of Action” on November 1, with a dozen community organizations reaching out to community members. We planted a native Redbud in honor of the 24 trees to be planted by Casey Trees in the Creekside Village and Colchester Towne affordable-housing communities just west of Route 1. Read more on the [ANS Blog](#). See more photos on page 12.

**¡Si Se Puede! (Long Branch, Silver Spring, MD):** ANS and our partners are now working with Long Branch families to comment on the Montgomery Parks Garland Park renovation. Families will continue to define an issue and conduct research towards solving problems related to improving the health of their local stream. If you speak Spanish or Arabic and would like to volunteer at our next outreach events, contact [denisse.guitarra@anshome.org](mailto:denisse.guitarra@anshome.org). Check out our [ANS Blog](#) to learn more about this project.

**Greening Your Neighborhood (Loudoun County, VA):** Since the fall of 2020, nearly 50 residents from 28 different HOAs have committed to completing a conservation project on their common property in conjunction with their Board, by June 2022. Countryside HOA has already completed a tree planting, and families got to name their adopted tree in exchange for providing its care for the first two years. Other projects underway include revegetating stormwater infrastructure with native plants, creating a new landscape committee, and a stormwater retrofit!

## Workshops

### Volunteer with ANS Conservation on Advocacy & Policy!

FREE

Wednesday, December 15 (4:30-5:30 pm)  
(In-person at Woodend and virtual option as well)

Call for Conservation research and advocacy volunteers! Ready for a new volunteer opportunity to help protect people and nature? All interested Master Naturalist and other volunteers in DC, MD, and VA are invited to our Kickoff Meeting on December 15. You'll learn about training, onboarding, and how we plan to welcome volunteer expertise to help further the work of ANS Conservation. RSVP at [anshome.org/training](https://anshome.org/training).

### Environmental & Conservation Advocacy 101

Wednesday, February 9 (1-3:30 pm)  
Instructor: Eliza Cava (via Zoom)  
ANS members \$20; nonmembers \$30. 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, and introducing campaign skills that allow everyone to bring their strengths to the table.

### Conservation Cafés

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

- **Reducing Building Emissions: Fighting One of the Top Two Sources of Greenhouse Gases in the DC Region.** Wednesday, December 8, 7-8:30 pm.
- **Reducing Waste and Pollution by Transforming Our Economy.** Thursday, January 20, 7-8:30 pm.
- **Get to Know a Jewel of Washington, DC: Meet the New Director of Friends Park.** Thursday, February 17, 7-8:30 pm.

### Interested in getting involved or learning more?

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

# Nature Preschool

This September brought ANS a triumphant re-opening of its beloved Nature Preschool which closed due to COVID-19 in March 2020. New and returning families, students and staff welcomed the new school year with unbridled enthusiasm and glee. Nature Preschool program details were carefully tweaked with an abundance of caution to keep everyone, especially our unvaccinated young children, safe. Nature Preschool pivoted to offer all-outdoor, masked, program offerings for children aged 6 and younger. Our expert staff previously spent the majority of Nature Preschool days outdoors and seamlessly morphed our offerings to be 100% outdoors.

Veteran ANP teachers welcomed and mentored new teaching partners. New and returning Master Naturalist volunteers committed to spending a full day with our programs weekly. Preschool staff and volunteers excitedly explored the restored ANS grounds and planned new and innovative curricular units to use with Preschoolers based on the restored stream, pond, and trails. While much has changed on the ANS grounds, the sounds of the Nature Preschool remain the same: peals of laughter, exclamations of joy and discovery, and quiet reflections and questions of wonder and curiosity continue to be the Nature Preschool soundtrack. We are so happy to be back!

Nature Preschool drop-off programs include the drop-off Saplings and Oaks programs for 3-6 year old children and the Acorns program for children aged 4 years and younger alongside their favorite adults. Registration for the 2022-2023 school year will open at the end of December/early January. Learn more at [www.ANShome.org/preschool](http://www.ANShome.org/preschool).



Saplings Teacher Kristin Horneffer reads the story of *Bear's New Friend*, where a few forest animals discover an owl after asking "Whooo's there?"

# Connecting Youth to Nature



## Days Off Camps (Grades K-5)

Monday, January 24, 2022

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

Friday, April 1, 2022

Monday, May 2, 2022

8:45 am-5 pm

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 School's Out 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-Thursday, April 14, 2022

8:45 am-3 pm

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



## Day of Action in Creekside

Youngsters enjoyed hours of nature-themed fun during our recent “Day of Action” event at Creekside Village Community Center in Northern Virginia. The event was part of our Water Keepers of Little Hunting Creek program in Fairfax County, VA, which is designed to connect adults and children to nature in their community. One of the highlights of the day was the planting of the first of two-dozen native trees.





The trees, provided by Casey Trees, will be planted in Creekside Village and Colchester Towne through December and are funded as part of a pilot project partnership with Fairfax County. The Day of Action, offered in partnership with United Communities, also helps connect residents to social service agencies along the Route 1 corridor, including United Community, the Financial Empowerment Center, and Fairfax County partners including Neighborhood & Community Services and Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District. Thank you to Community Foundation For Northern Virginia for its generous support of the Water Keepers of Little Hunting Creek program. Photos by Ben Israel.



# GreenKids Program

After a year of distance learning, GreenKids staff have been thrilled to return to schools in person this year. We kicked off the new school year with a special treat for students at our four new MCPS GreenKids schools: Fallsmead, Ritchie Park, Flora Singer, and Flower Hill. Our entomologist friends from George Washington University and Georgetown University shared their “Caterpillar Road Show” with more than 300 third graders at these schools in support of the Grade 3 science unit on Animal Behaviors. Students observed an amazing diversity of local caterpillars, discovered ways that caterpillars behave to evade predators, and learned how to be caterpillar detectives! Many thanks to Dr. John Lill and Dr. Zoe Getman-Pickering from George Washington University, Dr. Martha Weiss from Georgetown University, and their students - Emma Lederer, Amruta Tendolkar, Ling Loh, Sarah Shamash, Luc Micheels, and Ryan Spahn - for bringing this amazing nature experience to our GreenKids schools!



GreenKids Naturalist Gina Ghertner guides students at Flora Singer Elementary in becoming caterpillar detectives. Photo by Diane Lill.



The Imperial moth caterpillar, *Eacles imperialis*, is one of the largest caterpillars in the Eastern US and one of several species of giant silk moths. Photo by John Lill.



The Puss caterpillar, *Megalopyge crispata*, is protected by long hairs and venomous spines that can give unwary predators (or people!) quite a sting. Photo by John Lill.

## What is GreenKids?

GreenKids is a grant-funded program of ANS that has been generously supported by Howard Hughes Medical Institute and other funders since 2005. GreenKids supports environmental literacy and engages public school students in hands-on science and environmental stewardship in Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and Loudoun County. GreenKids schools receive free instruction, teacher training, and resources for field trips and school gardens over a partnership period of two years. For more information, visit [www.anshome.org/greenkids](http://www.anshome.org/greenkids).



Entomologist Dr. John Lill teaches students at Flower Hill Elementary how to open leaf ties to discover the caterpillars inside. Photo by Diane Lill.

## Summer Camp 2022

Registration opens **Monday, January 24** at 10 am for ANS members. Offering full day camps for Grades K-12.

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



## 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](https://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.

# 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)

### Midweek Meanders Along the Canal

Wednesdays (10 am-12:30 pm)

L. December 1 – Swain’s Lock **WAITLIST OPEN**

M. December 15 – Carderock

Leader: Stephanie Mason

Each walk members \$30; nonmembers \$42

We’ll wrap up our fall series of walks along portions of the C&O Canal Towpath which see less foot and bicycle traffic during the week than on weekends. Our focus will be the general—and exceedingly rich—natural history of the varied habitats along the Potomac River and the historic Canal. We’ll proceed at a “naturalist’s shuffle” pace, stopping often to observe and ID still-active wildlife, plants of the season—and whatever we might find. *Bi-weekly Winter Walks Along the Canal will start in January.*

### December in the Parks

A. Saturday, December 4 (10 am-12:30 pm)  
Pennyfield Lock, MD

B. Sunday, December 12 (10 am-12:30 pm)  
Scotts Run, VA

Each walk members \$30; nonmembers \$42

Leader: Stephanie Mason

With daylight hours in decline and frosty overnights on the rise, we invite you to enjoy the changing seasons on a broad-based nature walk with our Senior Naturalist. We’ll walk between 2-3 miles, on natural surface trails, as we enjoy the last hurrah of fall and the early signs of (inevitable) winter. *We’ll be hiking on natural surface trails which will possibly be muddy. The Towpath trail on the Pennyfield trip is flat, while the terrain on the Scotts Run hike includes uphill/downhill and some rocky and uneven stretches.*

### Late Autumn Tree Walk at Theodore Roosevelt Island

Thursday, December 2 (9:30 am-12:30 pm)

Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley

Members \$35; nonmembers \$49

**WAITLIST  
OPEN**

Join long-time ANS field trip leader and author of the award-winning *Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island* and other nature books for a seasonal exploration of this 90-acre island in the Potomac River. The Park serves as a fitting memorial to our conservationist and naturalist 26th President—who was an Audubon Naturalist Society member. The botanical walk will take you deep into the island, where swamp and tidal inlet can be explored by boardwalk as willows, bald cypresses and cattails frame views of the city behind it. Melanie will also share details of this National Park’s fascinating history. Expect a flat walk of nearly two miles at a leisurely pace. *Our circuit will traverse natural surface trails and boardwalk, both of which may be muddy and/or slippery.*

### ANS COVID Policy for Outdoor Adult Programs

Continuing this winter, 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. At this time, masks are required indoors at Woodend for everyone. Twelve will be our usual group size maximum, unless an outing’s focus/and or field conditions call for a smaller group.

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.





## Early Winter Waterfowl Prowls

**A: Sunday, December 5 (8:30-11 am)**

**B: Thursday, December 16 (8:30-11 am)**

**Leaders: Mike Bowen and Anne Cianni**

**Each walk members \$30; nonmembers \$42**

December is a good time to begin learning how to ID overwintering waterfowl in our area. Typically, local waters are not yet frozen and outdoor temperatures are still comfortable for the birders! We'll base our searches at Gunner's Lake in Germantown, MD, where a trail around the water allows for waterfowl watching with binoculars. Of course, our leaders will be carrying a scope and anyone is welcome to bring along their own as well. While our focus will be waterfowl, we'll keep an eye open for all manner of birdlife in the habitats around the Lake's perimeter. *Since spaces are limited, only one walk per person please.*

## Widewater Geology Loop

**Tuesday, December 7 (9 am-Noon)**

**Leader: Joe Marx**

**Members \$32; nonmembers \$44**

The section of C&O Canal towpath downstream from the Great Falls Tavern in Maryland offers dramatic erosional features and gnarled outcrops. While local bedrock was deposited and metamorphosed during the assembly of Pangea, the riverine landscape of today developed in response to continental glaciation to our north. On a 3-mile loop hike from the Widewater parking area opposite Old Angler's Inn, our leader will use the scenery to outline this popular area's geologic history. We'll hike upstream on the Towpath to the Canal's stop gate, and then return on the Berma Road. *The Towpath is uniformly level with a graveled surface in most places, while the old Berma Roadway is natural surface, slightly hilly, and sometimes rocky or muddy.*

WAITLIST  
OPEN

## Winter Birding at Black Hill

**Saturday, December 11 (8:30-11 am)**

**Leader: Mark England**

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

The winter months can be an ideal time to learn more about birds and birding, and Black Hill Regional Park, in upper Montgomery County, is an ideal outdoor classroom. This walk, intended for beginning to mid-level birders, will explore several sites in the Park in a search for waterfowl, sparrows, woodpeckers, raptors, and other resident and overwintering species. The Park's habitats are varied, and include wetlands and Little Seneca Lake, as well as forest and field. *We will offer a continuing series of walks at Black Hill through March so that participants can observe the seasonal changes in bird numbers, diversity, and behavior. Park trails may be natural surface with muddy and uneven stretches, and they may include uphill and downhill.*

## Winter Solstice Walk at Woodend

**Saturday, December 18 (1-2:30 pm)**

**Leader: Josh Schwartz**

**Members \$20; nonmembers \$30**

Join Josh Schwartz on a winter solstice walk around Woodend. Appreciate the change of seasons and the limited daylight while walking the trails. Note the peacefulness as we creep into the cold months of winter. Register at [www.anshome.org/woodend-tours](http://www.anshome.org/woodend-tours).

## Solstice Celebration

**Tuesday, December 21 (1-4:30 pm)**

**Leader: Stephanie Mason**

**Members \$32; nonmembers \$44**

The first day of winter in the Northern Hemisphere is arriving. Whether you call this astronomical event the shortest day of the year—or the longest night of the year—it's a good occasion to push away from your computer and join fellow nature lovers on a hike in a beautiful place. Our outing starts at the Widewater area along the Towpath and moves upriver to Great Falls. Here we'll traverse the bridges out to the Great Falls Overlook. After enjoying the celebratory drama and din of the Falls, we'll retrace our steps to Widewater. As daylight fades, we'll look and listen for wildlife activity—mostly birds—as they settle in for the longest night of the year. *Round trip of nearly 4 miles on the natural surface Towpath.*



@ANSNature



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 fall. 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.**

## Three Centuries of Birds: Bird Books from the 1500s to the 1800s

**Thursday, December 2 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Janet Millenson, Naturalist**

Most of us have accumulated a lot of bird books: identification guides; regional guides; accounts of bird behavior; and artsy coffee-table books. This presentation by naturalist Janet Millenson will show you how today's bird books evolved from their forerunners in the early days of printing and ornithology. We'll see some remarkably beautiful artwork, as well as some bizarre depictions and descriptions! Please register at [anshome.org/naturalist-hour](http://anshome.org/naturalist-hour)



18



## Cold Nights and Clear Skies: The Joys of Winter Astronomy

**Thursday, December 9 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Carrie Fitzgerald, Professor, Montgomery College**

Don't let cold temperatures keep you from star gazing! Winter offers more hours of darkness and better visibility compared to hazy and humid summer nights. During this presentation by Carrie Fitzgerald, Professor at Montgomery College, you'll learn what celestial wonders to look for over the next few months. You'll also discover a selection of online astronomical resources you can access while staying snug indoors. Grab some hot cocoa and cozy in for some winter astronomy delights. Please register at [anshome.org/naturalist-hour](http://anshome.org/naturalist-hour)

## Pond Life: Under the Ice from Winter into Spring

**Tuesday, December 14 (7-8 pm)**

**Presenter: Edwin Barkdoll, Maine Master Naturalist and Photographer**

Do you ever wonder what hides under the ice of a frozen pond? Have you ever witnessed the springtime explosion of amphibian life that follows winter? Join Maine Master Naturalist and photographer Edwin Barkdoll for an evening of exploring life under the ice, culminating in the annual amphibian emergence and migration. We will examine many creatures, from nearly microscopic crustaceans to the shy salamanders and boisterous frogs who emerge after ice breakup. Expect to look at frozen ponds with new eyes! Please register at [anshome.org/naturalist-hour](http://anshome.org/naturalist-hour)



# Stream Science

## VOLUNTEER WATER QUALITY MONITORING

For more than 25 years, ANS has been teaching the natural history of aquatic ecology and training volunteer stream monitors to track the health of our region's streams. Learn from the experts: study stream science in our introductory classes, and you just might be inspired to become a stream monitor yourself! We are actively recruiting new monitors and team leaders, including volunteers to support two new sites in eastern Prince George's County. To learn more about classes or becoming a volunteer, contact [cleanstreams@anshome.org](mailto:cleanstreams@anshome.org).

## STREAM SCIENCE CLASSES

**Cost for all classes:** \$15 ANS members / \$25 nonmembers / Free for anyone who has monitored with the ANS program in the last two years. Register at [anshome.org/events/stream-science-classes](https://anshome.org/events/stream-science-classes).

## Monitoring Stream Health with ANS\*

January 25, 2022 (7-8:30 PM) Free!

Woodend and/or via Zoom

Join us for an in-person (planned indoors with a livestream option, will switch to virtual if Covid conditions require) classroom session to learn about our volunteer water quality monitoring program and find out if it's a good fit for you. After this class, we'll match you with a monitoring team. New volunteers will take the two self-paced online introductory classes and attend a field workshop.

## Self-Paced Stream Science Classes

These classes are pre-recorded. Each class runs 45–70 minutes and includes photos and videos collected by our own volunteers and staff, plus recommended videos from other sources.

- **Stream Science Introduction Part 1: Healthy Stream Biology\*** Introduction to monitoring and assessing stream health through macroinvertebrate surveys – gain an appreciation of these fascinating critters!
- **Stream Science Introduction Part 2: How to Read Your Stream\*** Learn about the influence of land uses on streams, stream character and dynamics, bank erosion, bar formation, substrate composition, different velocity-depth regimes, and the importance of riffles and riparian vegetation.
- **Advanced Macroinvertebrate Identification Series:** Learn aquatic macroinvertebrate identification to the family level. These classes are required for all volunteer monitoring team leaders and offer interested naturalists, fly fishers, aquatic scientists, and others a great education on the animals that live in our region's streams. Topics include Caddisflies; Beetles; Megaloptera, Hemiptera, Lepidoptera; True Flies; Damselflies and Dragonflies; Mayflies; and Stoneflies. Sign up for the entire class series for a 15% discount (\$102 members/\$170 nonmembers) and a bonus review session.

\* These classes are required for all volunteer monitors.



Monitoring at Little Patuxent in the time of Covid (Spring 2021). Photo credit Gregg Petersen.

### Learn More & Get our Data:

<https://anshome.org/water-quality-monitoring> Look under "Reports & Data" for a map and data for all of our sites.



Photo by Gregg Trilling



# 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.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, 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).

## Mammals of the Mid-Atlantic

**NATH8290E, 3 CEUs**

**Class night and time: Mondays, 6-8 pm**

**Class meetings: January 10 -March 14; no class on January 17 or February 21**

**Lectures – via zoom**

**Field trip dates: January 29 at ANS-Woodend, February 19 at Rachel Carson Conservation Area, March 5 at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, all 9:30 am-2 pm**

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

**Instructor: Kerry Wixted**

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



Mammals are a diverse and fascinating group of organisms. This course will examine the characteristics, physiology, adaptations, ecology, and behavior of mammals. Much of the focus will be on species of the mid-Atlantic region. Studies will include identification through analysis of skulls, study skins, tracks, and other signs commonly found in natural areas.



## Geology

**NATH7175E, 3 CEUs**

**Class night and time: Tuesdays, 6–8:30 pm (ten meetings with a two-week break in February TBD)**

**Class meetings: January 11–March 29**

**Lectures – via zoom**

**Field trip dates: Saturdays, March 5, 12 and 19 (all day);**

**Rain/snow date on Saturday, March 26**

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

**Instructor: Joe Marx**

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

We may not have the Rockies in our backyard, but we have the roots of mountains that were as high as the Alps. Although earthquakes are rare now, our region twice broke in two and the ocean flowed in. Central Atlantic geology tells a story as fascinating as that of any place on the planet. Course lectures introduce the landscapes, subsurface structures and geologic history of our region. Three field trips emphasize the recognition of local landforms and the geological processes that created them.

## Do you participate in the National Capital Area CFC?

The easiest way to support ANS is to designate the **Audubon Nationalist Society 75493** in the 2021 Combined Federal Campaign under EarthShare Mid-Atlantic.



The following classes are confirmed for the winter session but details had not been finalized as of press time. Please visit [www.anshome.org/nhfs](http://www.anshome.org/nhfs) for more information.



## Night Sky for Naturalists

NATH2100E, 1.5 CEUs

Lectures – via zoom, no field trips

Instructor: Jean Mansavage



## Weather and Climate

NATH1140E, 3 CEUs

Lectures – via zoom, with field trips

Instructor: Terry McTigue



Photo by Ben Israel.

Congratulations to Rob Bannister, who was presented his 2021 Natural History Field Studies Certificate of Achievement by ANS Adult Programs Director Serenella Linares at the Annual Meeting at ANS on October 21.

## 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

## Falling for Fungi

Late autumn is a great time to observe fungi. That's when decomposers really go to work. ANS Adult Programs director and mycologist Serenella Linares recently led fungi fans on a search through Woodend Nature Sanctuary sharing fungi's important and under-appreciated role in forest ecology and describing the fungal cycling of nutrients here at Woodend. You can always find a wide variety of interesting opportunities to explore the outdoors with knowledgeable naturalists at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults). Photos by Ben Israel.





# Partner Profile



*ANS is so grateful to our many partners who have helped make the Naturally Latinos Conference a success since 2017. Some partners have served on the planning committee for multiple years and then deepened their involvement with the organization, like Abel. Others have joined this year for the first time but have been long-time community partners and leaders, like Ana. We learn so much from our partners and appreciate their incredible support of the conference and ANS.*



## Ana Arriaza

**Partnership and Engagement Program Manager,  
Montgomery County Department of Environmental  
Protection**

Ana Arriaza is the Partnership and Engagement Program Manager at the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Ana helps develop and execute department-wide outreach and partnerships with new and existing stakeholders. She has been involved with the ANS Long Branch “Si Se Puede” project where she has led on conducting various bilingual activities including pet waste pick up activities, incandescent to LED bulb exchanges, litter clean up days, and storm drain paintings. Although she is new to the Naturally Latinos Conference 4 (NLC4) planning committee, she has helped with outreach in previous conferences. Ana is a longtime resident of Montgomery County and graduate of the School of Engineering at the University of Maryland at College Park. In her spare time, Ana enjoys traveling and spending time with her dog, Mr. Bear.



## Abel Olivo

**Co-founder and Executive Director,  
Defensores De La Cuenca**

Abel Olivo (he/him/él) is a dedicated promoter of environmental education and access to nature for the well-being of Latin@ communities. He attended the first-ever Naturally Latinos Conference (NLC1) in 2017 as an attendee, then joined the conference planning committee for NLC2. By NLC3 he was serving on the ANS Board of Directors. He continues in that role in addition to serving once again on the planning committee for NLC4. Abel’s activism spans the Chesapeake Bay Watershed while centering on Prince George’s County, Maryland, where Latin@ residents have increasingly found a home, representing a growth of 7%-20% of the county’s population during 2000-2020. He co-founded Defensores De La Cuenca to celebrate and strengthen Latin@ recreational access to the region’s watersheds and popular understanding of watershed ecology. ANS partners regularly with Defensores for bilingual nature walks, school programming, and panels and advisory groups throughout the region.



Save the Date . March 22 - 26 2022

# NATURALLY LATINOS<sup>®</sup> 4 CONFERENCE

Otro mundo es posible  
Another world is possible

ANS is excited to announce that the dates for the fourth Naturally Latinos Conference will be March 22-26, 2022.



Registration will open in mid-December at [anshome.org/naturally-latinos](http://anshome.org/naturally-latinos) and we expect to announce the exciting agenda at that time. Much of the conference will be held virtually with in-person days on Friday and Saturday (COVID permitting). Bilingual English/Spanish interpretation will be available throughout the conference. Be sure to register soon for early-bird pricing!

Join us to talk with Latinx colleagues, activists, and experts about climate change, environmental justice, immigration, language justice, indigeneity, outreach, journalism, career development, advocacy, and more. You'll enjoy workshops, networking sessions, panels, film screening, music and dance. We look forward to gathering to re-connect, re-envision, re-commit, and re-vitalize our joy and hope for the future, juntos.

**LAST CHANCE!**

Don't miss your opportunity to see two of our most popular Naturalist Hour recordings



**40 BIRDS** that Everyone in the DMV Should Know



with Mark Garland

**FEAR, fascination, & FUN** WITH THE RETURN OF PERIODICAL CICADAS



with Dr. Mike Raupp

\$10 for ANS members  
\$12 for nonmembers

Register at <https://bit.ly/3HrPdsn>

You'll receive a YouTube link allowing you to view these recordings at your convenience.


**Thank you to our lead sponsor,  
the U.S. Forest Service Office of Urban and Community Forestry!**



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/Chispa)
- Denisse Guitarra (ANS) · Lin Orrin (ANS)

And our conference co-chairs: Eliza Cava (ANS) and Serenella Linares (ANS)

 [facebook.com/audubonnaturalistsociety](https://facebook.com/audubonnaturalistsociety)

# Families in Nature





# 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

Audubon Naturalist Society

### Future naturalists-in-the-making

On a beautiful Saturday morning, this family joined naturalist/educator Frank Sanford for a leisurely stroll through the habitats of Woodend Nature Sanctuary. Held the first Saturday of the month, these Family Walks in the Woods are seasonally-themed and specially designed for families with children 8 and younger. You can learn more and register at [anshome.org/parents/](https://anshome.org/parents/) under the FAMILY EVENTS tab. Photos by Ben Israel.

# 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.

## Northern Minnesota Winter Quest

**February 18-22, 2022**  
**Leader: Paul Pisano**

Join us as we explore the iconic forests, bogs, and Lake Superior shoreline of northern Minnesota to search for birds and other animals that make this wonderland their winter home. On this long weekend we'll be based in Duluth and travel through rich and varied habitats, scanning the trees and brush for such amazing birds as Great Gray Owl, Northern Hawk-Owl, and Snowy Owl. We also search for the winter finches often found in the region, such as Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Red and White-winged Crossbills, and Common (and with luck Hoary) Redpolls. Ruffed, Sharp-tailed and (rarely) Spruce Grouse, woodpeckers, Canada Jay, Northern Shrike, Bohemian Waxwing and Boreal Chickadee are also on the list of species we'll spend time looking for as we drive the back roads. While the total trip list will fall well short



*Great Gray Owl: Photo by Tambako The Jaguar/Flickr (CC BY-ND 2.0)*

of 50 species, the birds we expect to see will include many that we don't encounter in the mid-Atlantic region. It will be cold and brisk, so pack your layers and come along on this winter adventure.

## 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. All were taken by our trip leader Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason. Go to page 39 for the answers.



a



b



c

**Covid-19 Update**  
 We hope to offer additional trips in the upcoming months, taking into consideration Covid precautions based on local conditions and current government recommendations, including vaccinations. Our Covid guidelines for the February birding trip (above) will be outlined in the registration packet.

## Volunteer Corner

### An occasional feature that highlights the many and varied opportunities and volunteers at ANS

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

Where does the time go? It seems like only yesterday we were “Springing Forward.” As I write this, we’re preparing to “Fall Back.” Oh, the changes that have happened in the interstices between those events! Our Woodend Nature Sanctuary now has new trails, a restored stream, and new pond. We’ve been giving tours and welcoming so many people! Volunteers helped Gregg Trilling as he kept up with our water quality monitoring. Denisse Guitarra and Jenny Brown continued our community outreach with folks in Long Branch in Silver Spring. Volunteers have also helped with research for major conservation concerns—that Beltway Expansion plan didn’t read itself! Our Restoration team has been busy outside. Our nature educators are teaching preschoolers and hosting Naturalist Hour presentations. Many of you even helped us make the decision to change our name. Talk about a busy few months! Thank you all for your patience, diligence and persistence. We appreciate your support and engagement.

This season, I’d like to introduce you to two of the folks who have been helping ANS: Mara McCall and Megan Carroll. Mara has lived in the DC region since the 1990s. She works in graphics and says she enjoys “the contrast of natural communities in the area.” Mara became a Maryland Master Naturalist in 2018 and has donated more than 220 hours of her time to ANS since then. Megan is “a long-time ANS member who loves to spend time outside birding and hiking.” She completed the Master Naturalist course last year as part of the All-Virtual Class. Her first memory of working with ANS dates back to a Nature Travel trip to Peru led by the incredible Dr. Don Messersmith in 2001. “He opened my eyes to so many things, and I’ve never looked back,” Megan says. Former ANS Board Vice President Megan is also Chair of our Woodend 2065 Committee which helps guide our Restoration activities into the future. She also gets her hands dirty—literally—in the field by helping with restoration work in our meadows and forest.

When I asked Mara what initially drew her to ANS, she said she first heard about ANS “from some signs along Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda pointing to a bird sanctuary. After some time, my curiosity won out and I followed the signs to visit Woodend.” Curiosity is a trait common among our volunteers and staff alike. I’m glad Mara couldn’t resist knowing more and followed those signs. And I’m glad she keeps asking questions. “I learn something new with every visit,”

she told me recently. “Once, while working in the meadow, a fellow volunteer discovered a bird nest nestled in the grasses and vines. Curiosity led to discovery and knowledge.” It was in indigo bunting nest, she learned.

For Megan, with nearly two decades of ANS memories, she says, “Seeing the stream restoration and accessible trail projects go from ideas to plans to reality is one of the most memorable and fulfilling experiences here at ANS.” While it may have seemed like it all just happened overnight—or in the interstices between time changes!—the Woodend Restoration project took years of thought, planning and effort before the first shovel hit the ground.

Thank you Megan, thank you Mara, for your service to ANS! And thank you to each and every one of you who donate your time and talent. From holiday wreath-making (porcelain berry vines can be useful!) to invasive species removal to advocating against bad infrastructure planning to meeting our neighbors and building relationships, ANS is successful because of the people who help us do advance our mission. Thank you!

If you’re interested in becoming a part of our volunteer corps, please feel free to contact me. As Megan Carroll wisely puts it, “It’s a great way to get outside and make a difference!”



Mara McCall helps to move mulch as part of our trail maintenance work. Photo by Mitch Greene.



Megan Carroll helps control Porcelain Berry in one of our meadows. Photo by Mitch Greene.

# Thanks for Joining Us!

## ANS Annual Meeting Celebrates 2021 Triumphs and a Hopeful Future

The title of award-winning naturalist Mark Garland's keynote presentation perfectly summed up 2021: "The Covid Year." The year began with high hopes that the worst of the pandemic was behind us. Unfortunately, hardships continued well into 2021. Just as Mark did, and illustrated beautifully with nature photos and observations from his daily walks near his home, ANS made the best of a challenging situation. It was all thanks to the unwavering support of members, donors, volunteers, partners, and staff that our fiscal year ended with so much good mission work accomplished.



Executive Director Lisa Alexander, incoming Board President Diane Wood, and Board Member Alan Spears at the ANS Annual Meeting on Oct. 21.

"ANS is doing a remarkable job delivering on our mission and vision," outgoing ANS Board President Nancy Pielemeier told a first-ever hybrid audience of in-person and virtual attendees. "Your support and shared vision are why ANS is on a strong trajectory to emerge from the pandemic – better, wiser, and stronger than ever."

### 2021 Highlights

Pielemeier explained that despite starting its fiscal year under the cloud of the pandemic, ANS successfully adapted programs and events to safely connect people to the outdoors. For example, our summer camps were fully-masked and limited in size but they were enthusiastically welcomed by children and parents alike. Even though our Nature Preschool closed for the year, our teachers delivered small, in-person programs and used new technology to keep our youngest naturalists connected to nature. Our GreenKids program inspired more than 11,000 students with virtual environmental lessons. And for adults, we offered online, in-person, and hybrid programs. Our Natural History Field Studies program's hybrid format drew robust enrollment. More than 1,300 people attended our all-virtual Naturally Latinos and Taking Nature Black conferences.

"It will take several years for our revenue streams to fully rebound, but ANS is well-poised to be resilient," outgoing Board Treasurer Alice Ewen reported.

"When our year-end request for funding arrives, please continue to give generously. Every dollar you contribute enables us to achieve our vision of creating a larger, more diverse community of people who treasure the natural world and work to preserve it."

### Nature for All

Creating that larger community was a major inspiration for ANS's Nature for All projects at Woodend Nature Sanctuary. Completing those projects in 2021 was a silver lining of a difficult year, Pielemeier told attendees. "We are extremely proud to have unveiled our stream restoration and wheelchair-accessible nature trail at Woodend," she said. "We added thousands of native plants and trees to our habitats and wildlife has returned in droves."

"And these projects are just the beginning. Next year, we will install a wheelchair-accessible Nature Play Space for children and launch new programming for people of all ages and abilities while demonstrating best green practices and climate resilience for our broad and diverse community," Pielemeier said. "For all of this and more, we thank you, our members and donors."

## Naming the Future

"Tonight, we have an exciting announcement to make," ANS Executive Director Lisa Alexander said as she revealed the major news of the evening. "After listening to the voices of our ANS community of members, volunteers, program participants, donors, our Board and our partners, we have decided to change our name to signal a new chapter – one that builds on the victories of our past and moves us forward toward a stronger, more inclusive future."

The decision - unanimously approved by the ANS Board of Directors and supported by a majority of members -- acknowledges that the art of John James Audubon was a catalyst for bird conservation in our nation. However, Audubon was an owner of enslaved people and a vocal opponent of abolition. ANS understands that retaining his name without regard to the pain that he inflicted on Black and Indigenous people would be a disservice to the community we have a mission to serve and to the future of the environmental movement.

"The decision to change our name did not happen overnight, but has been over a decade in the making, guided by our strategic plan and the voices of our community," explained incoming Board President Diane Wood. "Since 2010, we have reassessed our policies and practices and updated our mission and vision, and added new programs to serve new audiences throughout the region."

Alexander emphasized that the organization's commitment to its longstanding mission and its pride in its many accomplishments over the past century are as strong as ever. She says the name change is an important opportunity to send a clear message: Nature Needs All of Us. "We need everyone at the table as we face the biggest environmental threat in human history, climate change," Alexander said. "This is also a terrific way to reintroduce ourselves to the region, communicating the breadth of our mission work, the uniqueness of what we do, the region we serve, our commitment to inclusion, and what binds us together – our shared love of nature."

"I appreciate this organization's bravery, steadfastness and willingness to listen to members, staff, partners, and allies on this issue, which is about the future of ANS and how we become a better organization," added Board member Alan Spears. Spears co-chaired the Board's Name Task Force and is chair of the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility) Committee.

Spears announced that members, staff, Board members, and community partners will play an integral role in choosing the organization's new name and brand identity. The process will include four main phases: Discovery, Insight, Creation, and

Execution. Invitations to participate will go out early next year with the goal being to announce the new name by the 2022 Annual Meeting, during ANS's 125 anniversary year. You can sign up for updates on the process at <https://anshome.org/namingthefuture/>

## Board Election

In a first-ever in-person/online hybrid vote, ANS members unanimously elected new Board members Noel Carson, Isha Renta-López, and John Green and re-elected Development Committee Chair Nancy Voit to a second term on the Board. You can read more about them on page 32.

Governance Chair, Carolyn Peirce, thanked outgoing Board President, Nancy Pielemeier, saying, "Nancy has been an outstanding, level-headed, and visionary leader. We are fortunate Nancy will continue to serve on the Board and we will have the benefit of her institutional knowledge as we move toward an exciting future for our organization."

Outgoing Board members received well-deserved recognition. Alice Ewen, who provided invaluable expertise during difficult times, served in many roles including Board Treasurer, Executive Committee member, Finance Committee Chair, IDEA Committee member, and Name Task Force co-chair. Rebecca Turner served as Board Secretary, on the Executive and Governance Committees, and she contributed her professional expertise in legal and environmental matters. Governance Committee member Susan Blaha served on the IDEA Task Force and graced ANS with her engineering background that helped improve efficiency, especially in Board recruitment. She also participated in more ANS programs than any other Board member in ANS history!



Outgoing Board President Nancy Pielemeier. Photo by Luca Casareto.

In addition to expressing fond appreciation for outgoing Board members, Pielemeier thanked ANS members like you for your faithful support.

"Thanks to your membership dues, your participation in our programs, your generous support, and your commitment to our shared mission and vision, ANS will thrive for the next 124 years!"

# Meet Our New Board Members

Three new people were elected to the ANS Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting on October 21. We are thrilled to welcome Isha Renta López, John Green and Noel Carson to the leadership team. Read more about them below!



**Isha Renta López** serves as the federal lead for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Science Council (NSC) and the Research and Development Enterprise Committee as a Management and Program Analyst in NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), Office of Science Support (OSS) in Silver Spring MD. Isha is a native of Ponce, Puerto Rico and holds a B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez, and a M.S. in Atmospheric Sciences from Howard University. In addition to her professional career, Isha is a mother of two daughters and is the founder of Semilla Cultural, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the Afro-Puerto Rican heritage through the bomba musical and dance genre. Isha is a passionate advocate for diversity in STEM and enjoys outreach and mentoring opportunities to shape the next generation of STEM leaders.



**John Green** is a Vice President of Commercial Banking at Sandy Spring Bank. As the primary relationship manager for a wide variety of corporations, non-profits, professional practices and government institutions, he works to find the most effective and tailored financial and business solutions for his clients. He has been in the financial world and banking industry for over 20 years, having earned his Bachelor of Business degree from James Madison University. As a life-long student and lover of natural history, he has volunteered at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park in Washington, DC and at an equine therapy center in Wellington, Florida. He resides in Chevy Chase, MD with his wife Olivia and their two dogs. His goal is to bring his years of financial experience to benefit an organization that shares his passion for nature and conservation.



**Noel Carson** is Senior Director of Marketing with Bozzuto, a diversified real estate organization celebrated for its mixed-use developments, construction, property management, and homebuilding across the US. He has over 15-years of progressive marketing experience managing and executing complex integrated brand campaigns across all channels. One of his newest projects includes Chevy Chase Lake, a project that will bring three residential buildings to Chevy Chase, Maryland. Noel has been collaborating with ANS to provide ANS memberships to new residents of Chevy Chase Lake. Noel graduated from the University of Notre Dame Mendoza College of Business with dual majors in Marketing and Design. He holds Certificates of International Business and Asian Pacific Studies from Notre Dame Australia. Noel also holds an MBA from the Georgetown University McDonough School of Business. He is a current resident of Chevy Chase, Washington, DC.



## STAFF UPDATES



### Corinna Fisk

Corinna Fisk is the new Development Director at ANS. A Washington DC native, she grew up exploring our region's green spaces and that sparked a passion for science and nature. As a result, she dedicated her career to growing support for wildlife education and conservation organizations. "I am thrilled to join the ANS team," Corinna said. "I look forward to helping build a broad and diverse network that inspires our present and next generations to care about our precious natural resources."



### Jamoni Overby

Jamoni Overby is the new Conservation Advocate for the District of Columbia. She's a recent graduate of the University of Maryland specializing in Government/Politics, African American Studies and Sustainability. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, traveling, listening to music, and tending to her plants. She says she looks forward to devoting her skills to conservation work, specifically related to increasing access to nature for communities East of the River. "I can't wait to see how I will be able to apply my experience to contribute to the overall mission and purpose of ANS," Jamoni says.



### Vince Robinson

Congratulations to Vince Robinson on his promotion to Director of Marketing and Communications. Previously, Vince served ANS as Webmaster and Social Media Manager helping to grow our online audiences. His experience includes print and broadcast journalism, public and media relations, and marketing and advertising. "It's such an exciting time for ANS," Vince says. "This is such an incredible opportunity to help further the organization's exposure and growth."

**REMEMBER THE BIRDS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!**

The Naturalist Shop at Woodend offers high-quality **birdseed & suet, feeders, and birdbaths.**

Holiday Shopping Hours:  
Monday-Saturday  
11am-3pm  
Online ANYTIME!



# Restoration

Before.....



In an area dubbed “the tangle,” invasive mile-a-minute dominated the forest edge restricting the growth of native plants.

After....



After restoration, this area now boasts tall sumacs, healthy black-eyed Susans, oak seedlings, honey locust, and much more!

## Tackling “The Tangle”

While contractors were working with heavy machinery to restore the Woodend stream, the ANS restoration staff worked with hand tools and volunteers to improve invasive “hot spots” in other areas at Woodend with great success. One such area, formerly nicknamed “the tangle,” was dominated by mile-a-minute, wisteria, non-native yam, multiflora rose, and porcelain berry. After a multiple-year effort to reduce these invasive species, native plants were added. After three years, this area is now full of sumac, sweetgum, oak seedlings, eastern red cedar, dogwood, spicebush, and black-eyed Susan! Continuous removal of wisteria and Chinese yam will be necessary, but this area has much higher native diversity now. In total, 2000 square feet of mile-a-minute was replaced with native plants!

This past year, our wonderful Chesapeake Conservation Corps member Christina Rogelio chose a “capstone project” to restore a degraded drainage area within the forest. The area had been dominated by non-native pachysandra and Japanese maple with very few native plants. She rallied other conservation corps members and ANS volunteers to help her remove the extensive root system of the pachysandra within the area. Christina also led the installation of stormwater control practices, using nearby downed logs to direct and slow down runoff. Native plants were added thanks to grants from the Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Committee and the Chesapeake Bay Trust. The ANS restoration staff took on the Japanese maples with a chainsaw and worked with volunteers to create a wattle fence that encourages visitors to stay on the marked trail to prevent trampling the new native plants. Once dominated by invasive species, this area is now home to over 200 native plants including swamp white oak, pin oak, northern red oak, black gum, river birch, musclewood, dogwood, mayapple, wild ginger, heartleaf foam flower, and more (including the rare butternut tree!). In total, Christina helped to restore 2,170 square feet of forest understory that will provide wildlife support for decades to come.



Winterberry at Woodend by Jenny Brown.

## Winterberry and Chokeberry a Feast for Birds

By Jenny Brown, Garden Outreach Associate

In the first few days of November, I had the chance to head out to the Lost River area in West Virginia to enjoy the fall leaf show. What a joy to see that the leaves were still vivid yellows, pinks and reds. We had two brilliant sunny days to drive the ridgetop roads and hike a few trails. Being more of a wildflower person than a tree person, I was thrilled to recognize many of the understory plants we have here at Woodend. My discoveries included Roundleaf Ragwort, Roundlobe Hepatica, and Elmleaf Goldenrod. But the biggest treat was seeing a large female Winterberry shrub loaded with gorgeous red berries growing alongside the trail that bordered a pond. You can find Winterberry at Woodend in the Blair Garden and along the path on the north side of the mansion. These berries will sustain birds after a hard freeze turns them sweet enough to be palatable; usually after the first of the new year. American Robins, Cedar Waxwing, Eastern Bluebirds and others can strip a shrub in a single day. Chokeberry is another food source for birds. We have a large Chokeberry in the Blair Garden that is heavy with fruit... until it isn't. They may have been gobbled up already! We want to keep our birds happy and coming back for more. To that end, we are planting more Chokeberry and Winterberry throughout the sanctuary.

## Woodend Tours



This winter our Family Walks with MD Master Naturalist Frank Sanford, as well as our Saturday Morning Bird Walks led by dedicated volunteer birders, will continue. On the first Saturday of December through March, from 9-10 am, families can join Frank in exploring the winter scenes of Woodend. On the second Saturday of these months, from 9-10 am, folks can join our experienced birders to learn about the over-wintering species that call Woodend home, including the winter wren, white-throated sparrow, and eastern towhee. Walks to explore the trees, gardens, and natural habitats of Woodend will be offered starting in April and will continue throughout the spring, summer, and fall. We look forward to seeing you at Woodend! Register at [anshome.org/woodend-tours](https://anshome.org/woodend-tours).

## ANS Garden Consultations

Use the winter months to plan for spring garden work. Sign up for an on-site **yard/garden consultation** with ANS Garden Outreach Associate Jenny Brown.

- 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/>



@ANSNature

# Woodend Grand Opening



The Nature for All restoration projects at Woodend Nature Sanctuary earned enthusiastic praise from attendees of our Grand Opening Celebration on October 6. Guided tours introduced more than 200 visitors to our restored stream, new native plants, and a quarter-mile accessible trail that allows people using wheelchairs, walkers, canes and strollers to enjoy all of the sanctuary's habitats. Visitors were also treated to a nature scavenger hunt and our popular native plant sale.

Come see the changes for yourself! Woodend Nature Sanctuary is free to visit from dawn to dusk, every day of the year.

*Photos by Ben Israel*







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.”

## MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE CONTRIBUTIONS August-October 2021

### IN HONOR OF:

#### **Arlene Bierman**

Jeanne Mandelblatt

#### **Deborah Bombard**

Jennifer Dreyfus; Diane Zipursky

#### **Ann Hobbs**

Marta Wagner

#### **Susan Hunt**

Marta Wagner

### IN MEMORY OF:

#### **Cris Fleming**

Jil Swearingen

#### **Rich Galloway**

Lawrence Bauer; Rick Calvert

#### **Paul Levine**

Stephanie Ansin; David Armstrong; Javier Betancourt; Rachel Blechman; Enrique Crooks; Colleen & Richard Fain; Roberto & Betty Horowitz; Paul, Aileen & Maria Martin-Abreu; Sager Family; Myra Silverstein; David Singer; Tropical Fruit & Vegetable Society of the Redland

#### **Betty Masket**

Carolyn Grund; Sue & Jeff Goldsmith; Ellen Wolf Slater

#### **Judith Olmer**

Jan Powers; Sharon Saylor

#### **Marjorie Rachlin**

Bill Yeaman

#### **Alice Caroline Ryan**

Oonagh Deasy; Nancy Miller

#### **Dolores Smith**

Anne DeNovo

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

For up-to-date info on Covid and ANS programming, visit [www.anshome.org/covid](http://www.anshome.org/covid)

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.

## Where in the World?? (pg 28)

a) Mary Conway "tests out" a hammock at La Cusinga Eco-Lodge in Costa Rica's Marino Ballena Natl. Park. February 2020.

b) Saddle-billed Storks were one of many dazzling wildlife sightings on our visit to the Serengeti Plains of Tanzania. November 2019 .

c) Travelers on our VENT/ANS cruise around the Galapagos Islands investigate beached whale bones. June 2019.

## You can help us continue to protect Nature for All with a special year-end gift to ANS!

At ANS we never lose hope. We see children and adults taking action every day to protect nature. It all starts with people like you.

With your support, ANS will continue to defend wildlife and local ecosystems, protect our streams, and teach people about the natural world right here at home.

Please send a special year-end gift today. Whether you can give \$25, \$50, \$100, or even \$500, every dollar counts.

Continue to protect nature for yourself, your loved ones and our future generations by making your tax-deductible, year-end gift by December 31.

You can donate online at [anshome.org/give](https://anshome.org/give)



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Photo by Ben Israel.

Congratulations to the members of the MD Master Naturalist Class of 2021, who celebrated the end of the course at Woodend on November 18.

Front row (L-R): Gabe Kornbluh; Sandy Adams; Susan Henry; Tyndall Traversa; Christy Concannon; Alex Alexander; Arvina Gadre; Allie Wilkinson

Back: Kara Sherk; Liz Guertin; Bill Cheeseman; Teresa Buescher; Carla Dinowitz; Jay Byrd; Molly Johnson; Linda Green; Sean Lynch