

AUDUBON NATURALIST SOCIETY

# Naturalist Quarterly

Summer 2020

ANSHOME.ORG



Conservation Advocacy at ANS:  
Dynamic and Changing

Pages 4-5

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-Friday 10 AM-5 PM  
Saturday 9 AM-5 PM  
Sunday 12-5 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+

NATURALIST QUARTERLY is published four times a year by the Audubon Naturalist Society, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Photos, art work, and articles may not be reprinted without permission from the editor. Opinions offered do not necessarily reflect official ANS policy. Advertised products or services do not carry the endorsement of ANS.

ISSN 0888-6555

#### MANAGING EDITOR

Caroline Brewer

#### SENIOR EDITOR

Pam Oves

© 2020 Audubon Naturalist Society

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

ANS Headquarters/Woodend  
Sanctuary  
301-652-9188  
FAX 301-951-7179  
ANShome.org  
contact@anshome.org  
Audubon Naturalist Shop  
301-652-3606

Conservation, MD x22  
Conservation, VA 571-278-5535  
Environmental Education x16  
Membership x35  
Publications, advertising x23  
Rentals x38  
Volunteers x20  
Contributions x31  
Special Events x12  
Rust Sanctuary 703-669-0000

#### OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Nancy Pielemeier ('22)  
VICE PRESIDENT Beth Ziebarth ('20)  
TREASURER Alice Ewen ('21)  
SECRETARY Becky Turner ('21)

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Susan Blaha ('21), James Burris ('22), Scott Fosler ('20), Patricia Hernandez ('21), Ryan Matney ('20), Hughey Newsome ('22), Abel Olivo ('22), Carolyn Peirce ('22), Gregg Petersen ('21), Rob Timmons ('20), Nancy Voit ('21), Larry Wiseman ('22), Diane Wood ('22)

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lisa Alexander

#### CONSERVATION

Eliza Cava, Director of Conservation; Gregg Trilling, Creek Critters Program Manager; Cathy Wiss, Water Quality Monitoring Program Coordinator; Ari Eisenstadt, DC Conservation Advocate; Denisse Guitarra, MD Conservation Advocate; Renee Grebe, VA Conservation Advocate; Camila Fishtahler, Intern

#### DEVELOPMENT

Jacky Wershbaile, Director of Development; Debra Prybyla & Lin Orrin, Grant Writers; Loree Trilling, Database Coordinator; Kristin Cook, Database & Email Assistant; Larry Petrovich, Assistant

#### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Diane Lill, Director; Stephanie Mason, Senior Naturalist; Stephanie Bozzo, Preschool Director; Amelia McLaughlin, Chelsea Hawk, Shannon Earle, Julie Walkup, Ruth Polk, Kate Bueno, Belinda Saffell, Preschool Teachers; Nora Kelly, Camp Director; Serenella Linares, School Programs Manager; Lauren Simpson, Lee Anne Graeb, Debbie Borkowski, GreenKids Specialists; Jenny Brown, Garden Programs Manager; Gina Ghertner, Mikel Moore, Denis Perez, Steven Pearce, Environmental Educators

#### FINANCE

Lois Taylor, Comptroller; Sherrice Ajebon, Senior Accountant/Benefits Manager; Alesha Mack, Staff Accountant

#### MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Caroline Brewer, Director of Marketing and Communications; Vince Robinson, Webmaster and Social Media Manager; Ben Israel, Videographer/Photographer

#### NATURALIST SHOP

Matt Mathias, Manager; Rebecca Henson, Naturalist Shop Specialist

#### OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Pam Oves, Office Manager; Carol Hayes, Office Coordinator

#### OPERATIONS

Amy Ritsko-Warren, Director of Operations

#### PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Bjorn Busk, Property Manager; Ami Smerling, Assistant Property Manager

#### RENTALS

Beatriz Engel, Manager

#### RUST SANCTUARY

Susanne Ortmann, NOVA Programs Manager; Ellen McDougall, Environmental Educator

#### VOLUNTEERS

Mitch Greene, Volunteer Coordinator

#### WOODEND RESTORATION

Alison Pearce, Director of Restoration; Bradley Simpson, Fellow

# Naturalist Quarterly

ANShome.org Summer 2020

From the Director	3
Conservation Advocacy at ANS: "Dynamic, Changing as Conditions Change, Seeking Always to Become More Effective"	4
Feature Nature Stories	6
Conservation	8
Children and Nature Photos	10
Children and Family Programs	12
Feature Nature Stories	14
Adult Nature Programs	16
Adults and Nature Photos	20
Feature Nature Stories	22
Partner Profile	24
Volunteer Corner	25
Feature Photos	26
Stream Science Classes	28
Free Birding Trips	29
Natural History Field Studies & Naturalist Hour	30
Nature Travel	32
Restoration	34
ANS News	36
Tributes	37
Registration Info	39

**COVER** Photo of Wood Ducks on Lake Churchill, Germantown, MD, by Pam Oves

## From the Director

### Without Benefit of a Crystal Ball

As my column photo shows, we have certainly gone 'through the looking glass' since the last edition of the *Naturalist Quarterly*. By now, probably every single ANS member knows someone affected by COVID-19. My heart swells with concern and sympathy for our community and our world, and with a simple longing for all of us to be together again soon. Without the benefit of a crystal ball, my job right now is to shepherd our 123-year old institution through this pandemic and ensure that we accomplish our mission work with whatever tools are allowed and available to us. (My batik fabric facemask, handmade by my mother, helps stiffen my spine for the challenges ahead.)



So where do we stand? When I sent the staff and volunteers home on March 16<sup>th</sup> and locked the doors of Woodend, I did not dream that we would remain on stay-at-home orders two and a half months later. But here we are. I've been so cheered to hear from each of you about how you are tapping into the joys of nature – from your computer, your window, your backyard and neighborhood – to help weather these lonely times. For me, nature poetry has re-entered my life and I find solace in poets new and old who have artfully composed words about nature that serve as inspiration during dark times.

You won't be surprised to hear that the ANS staff has acted creatively, resourcefully and nimbly to keep connecting people to nature. I hope you've checked out [www.anshome.org/stay-connected](http://www.anshome.org/stay-connected) to tune into all the ways we're now delivering online content. While Zoom meetings and YouTube videos may not be our favorite style of gathering, online activities actually do increase our reach to new audiences. And we're routinely seeing more people than ever before tune into ANS Zoom meetings, videos and webinars.

This is one of the silver linings of mandated telework. We are achieving our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility goals by delivering education, restoration and conservation content in brand new ways. And that is a positive lesson that we will carry forward into the future, even when we get permission to hold classes again.

## LETTERS

### Preschool Parent Shares Letter of Thanks

Hi dear teachers and Stephanie,

I wanted to just drop a note of appreciation to all of you. I think the biggest loss we all experienced this pandemic season was for our son to no longer be able to go to school after the amazing growth in calm and confidence and joy we saw him experience this past year at Audubon. I am very grateful for all the work you do; the care and dedication to developing these precious little people was a huge gift to our family.

I always appreciate your emails to parents with encouragement and insight. Whenever I see a link to Dr. Laura's peaceful parenting articles, it reminds me the preschool is a community of kindness and compassion—exactly where we want our little one to be.

I hope you and your families are well, and thank you again for teaching our little guy with such presence and dedication.

Best, Nayara

Our advocates are hard at work implementing the new advocacy priorities developed by our Climate and Conservation Task Force that you can read about on page 4. Check out the debut of *Naturalist Hour* programs in June on page 30. I think you will enjoy the line-up of ANS staff and regional scientists scheduled to help us learn even more about the natural world. You'll also see that this *Naturalist Quarterly* issue has pivoted from program listings to natural history reports. I'm certain we'll rely more than ever now on [www.anshome.org](http://www.anshome.org) to keep you up to date on what's new with ANS.

The flip side of this good news is the sobering fact that ANS stands to lose nearly \$1 million in revenue from March through August of 2020 if we are unable to host nature summer camp and wedding rentals. And that amount of loss is serious business. Together, the ANS staff and Board have worked diligently to create financial reserves for the organization. We are experiencing the rainy day those reserves were established to address. And we are taking advantage of every available government grant and loan program for which we qualify, including receiving a Payroll Protection Program loan in May. But the truth is, the longer our region remains in shutdown, the more profound the impact will be on ANS and its operations in the years ahead.

Here is what I know for certain. ANS will survive and thrive after the pandemic waves have passed. We are delivering on our mission every day in this new, altered world. And we continue to make progress on Nature for All projects. (I promise you one BIG PARTY at Woodend for the entire ANS community when we can gather again.) For today, we must rely on the generosity of ANS members and supporters to keep our work going strong. Please sign up for virtual programs, donate cancelled program fees and give generously to ensure that ANS stays the course at [www.anshome.org/donate](http://www.anshome.org/donate).

In closing, I'll tell you that I honestly believe those of us in the wider ANS community may be the fortunate ones. We are hard-wired to be curious about and protective of nature. And when you are required to stay-at-home, the brilliant sights and sounds of the natural world provide incomparable solace during lonely times. May the warm summer days and freshness of nature near and far serve as our beacon of hope for the future.

Stay well.

### Audubon Programs Make Lasting Impact

When my son, Will Haza, was a very young child he started attending the Audubon Naturalist Society classes. He loved the classes and enjoyed learning about different animals and their habitats.

One evening my husband took him to a class at ANS in which he learned about spring peepers. He imitated the sound that the little frogs made during the class. Ever since, he became very interested in developing his skills in creating a repertoire of different animals, insects, and characters.

He has been living in Los Angeles for the past 10 years trying to make it in the entertainment industry, as an actor. Over the past year and half, he has been focusing on voiceover animation acting. He has gotten a couple of contracts doing voiceover as different characters including a variety of animals. The final product should be released in August.

I wanted to express my deepest gratitude to the Audubon Naturalist Society for helping my son find his passion in life-voiceover animation.

Elia Haza

## Conservation Advocacy at ANS: “Dynamic, Changing as Conditions Change, Seeking Always to Become More Effective”

Photo by Cherisse May

by Eliza Cava, Director of Conservation

As world renowned conservationist and ANS Board Member Rachel Carson wrote, “Like the resource it seeks to protect, wildlife conservation must be dynamic, changing as conditions change, seeking always to become more effective.” Things have changed since 1897. The “low-hanging fruit” of conservation victories has been plucked. And the challenges facing humans in 2020, particularly **climate change**, endanger everything we have worked to protect for over 120 years. The threats and impacts of climate change are inextricably tied to the hazards facing vulnerable human and wildlife populations in our region. In severity, scope, and urgency, the climate crisis is a fight like no other the environmental movement has experienced.

To respond to the complexities that fighting climate change brings to the already-challenging arena of trying to conserve nature in a growing region, ANS assembled a Task Force of current and former Board members, Advocacy staff, and outside experts (see page 25 for more about the Task Force). The Task Force considered our mission, history, membership, partnerships, commitment to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility), and the facts and trajectory of climate change. The Task Force created and the Board of Directors adopted a new set of four **Priority Campaign Areas**:

- **Human Health & Access to Nature**
- **Biodiversity & Habitats**
- **Climate Crisis**
- **Sustainable Land Use**

ANS has been working in these areas for many years, but these campaign areas unify our advocacy work with forward-looking strategic priorities. You can read about how we are addressing each of the four Campaign Areas right now on pages 8-9 and at

[conservationblog.anshome.org](http://conservationblog.anshome.org). We are advocating for a cleaner Anacostia River. We are pushing for energy efficiency and better public transit—not issues you might have associated with a historic “birds and trees” organization. We are voicing strong support for critical equity and health funding in regional budgets, now dramatically impacted by COVID-19. And, we are weighing in

**“This is big news.”  
-Brent Bolin, Clean Water Action**



*An osprey soars over the Patuxent River at Patuxent River Park. Protecting our region's incredible corridors of green and blue habitats will remain a top focus under our “Biodiversity and Habitats” Priority Campaign Area. Photo by Will Parsons, Chesapeake Bay Program.*

*Flooding in Old Town, Alexandria. We promote natural solutions to climate change that remove carbon from the atmosphere, such as forest conservation, tree planting and other types of “green infrastructure” that address our region’s most significant climate impacts—flooding from increased storms, and hotter heat waves. Photo by John Sonderman via Flickr, CC BY-NC 2.0.*



on comprehensive plans that will guide growth, sustainability, and environmental protection in our region for decades to come.

There will be some tough decisions ahead, and these policy priorities will provide us with important guidance. For example, our region is predicted to keep growing for decades to come, even with the uncertainties of the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Where will our new neighbors live? How will they get to work? Where will their clean drinking water come from and how will they access *Nature for All*? We will work to solve these questions to provide equity for people and smart nature conservation in a tight space, prioritizing housing near transit and protecting intact ecosystems.

We also created new internal guidelines for Conservation staff to use in campaign planning to allow us to strategically focus our efforts. And, we updated the current Strategic Plan to better reflect the reality of the climate crisis. Task force member Anne Cottingham, a past ANS Board President, said, “This collaboration produced updated advocacy policies that, while no less ambitious, are thoughtful, strategic, and clear-eyed in the face of new challenges and limited resources. It is gratifying to see our beloved ANS look to the future without flinching!”

Task force member Danielle Reyes, Executive Director of The Crimsonbridge Foundation and founder of Yoga Hikes DC, said, “Growing up, I thought conservation organizations were for wealthy people, for science types, for other people. My parents taught me to identify birds and plants, to garden, to compost and not waste. We were never engaged in the work or messaging of the conservation organizations around us, despite being so aligned. There are many families like mine that should be invited in. I applaud ANS for its desire to incorporate human health and access into its conservation work and engage a broader community in its work on climate change, which is so urgently needed.”

“This is big news,” said Brent Bolin, former Chesapeake Regional Director of Clean Water Action. “As a historic, mainstream conservation organization, ANS is in a unique position to lead other traditional conservation organizations towards progressive climate change policies and the value of focusing development within existing footprints.”

**Learn more about our Priority Campaign Areas on our blog and on a new section of our website, at [anshome.org/conservation](https://anshome.org/conservation).**



*We fight sprawl through land-use and transportation planning, as it leaves people spread-out, car-dependent, destroys our forests, and increases stormwater runoff from excess pavement. We will also look for ways to improve and facilitate affordable, transit-oriented development, so that these types of new developments have ample green space, excellent stormwater runoff, and are energy efficient. Photo by Will Parsons, Chesapeake Bay Program.*

# Feature Nature Stories

Over the past few months since the intrusion of the pandemic upon our lives, nature, it seems, is giving us even more of its priceless self. We are living in times of great appreciation for the great outdoors, because outdoors is where a world of wonder awaits, refreshment is guaranteed, spirits are revived, and hope for better days springs eternal. Enjoy our nature essays by ANS staff and members who want to give you a little peek into what they are seeing, feeling, touching and knowing about the lush, textured, moving, growing, blooming, kaleidoscopically beautiful and richly rewarding natural world.

- Caroline Brewer, Managing Editor of the Naturalist Quarterly

## The Sound of Something Wonderful in the Wild: Mother Nature, a Mother Wood Duck, and One Glad Morning

by Pam Oves, Office Manager

Just about a year ago, my husband Chris and I observed a most remarkable event in nature. As I reflect on the story, I am just as tickled now as when it happened.

On an early spring day in May, Chris and I took our “usual” walk at Black Hill Regional Park. We live very close to the park and take advantage of the walking trail there several times a week. We were not too far from returning home when I heard a sound. I can’t quite articulate the sound except to describe it as very quiet “quack quack.” I couldn’t place the sound so we stopped. I heard it again and noticed a female wood duck in the water. The sound I heard was not one I associated with wood ducks, so I looked at the wood duck through my binoculars and observed that she, indeed, was uttering the quiet “quack quack quack.” Then I realized the female wood duck was swimming in circles underneath a nesting box and the light bulb went off! I grabbed my husband’s arm and whispered, “Honey, what if the wood duck is calling to her babies to come out?!!”

Sure enough, not a minute later, we saw a little duckling make his appearance in the hole in the box and jump into the water. One by one (and once two by two), the ducklings jumped in. PLOP. PLOP. PLOP. All in all, we watched 11 baby wood ducks make their debut in the world.

No one walked by during that time so we were the only two people to witness this spectacular display of nature. Even my friend and co-worker, Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason, told me she doesn’t know of any person who has seen this happen in the wild! When I tell people the story, some ask, “Do you have any pictures or video?” No, I tell them. We had neither a camera nor a cellphone with us that day, although normally we do. And I’m glad of it. I’m afraid if we did have a camera, we would have been too busy trying to get the perfect picture instead of being completely absorbed in the moment. So, while I don’t have a picture, I have a wonderful story and memory that will last forever.



While I didn’t get a photo of the baby wood ducks we saw last May, Denis Perez, an Environmental Educator with ANS, captured this photo of a wood duck family in early April this year next to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metro Station.

# Read, Play, and Listen to Enrich Children's Lives during this Time

by Stephanie Bozzo, Nature Preschool Director

It feels like everywhere we turn these days, there are lists and charts and schedules showing us unending ways to enrich our children's lives during the COVID-19 crisis. The Audubon Naturalist Society's incredible naturalists and nature-based educators pivoted on a dime from offering in-person nature programs and activities to creating online content, and for that, we are grateful.

Yet, we want to share with you three parenting activities that we recommend doing each day to enrich their lives even more. Spoiler alert: Although none of them have to do with outdoor spaces, we highly encourage doing as many of them as possible *in nature* because nature just makes everything better! Ultimately, we should understand that children might not remember the specific activities we do during this time, but they will remember the feelings associated with it, so let's make happy memories.

1. **Read!** When we snuggle up and read aloud to our children, it creates a space that lends itself to natural connection and shared experiences. No matter what type of books your children are into, carving out time to focus on books together is time well spent.
2. **Play!** Get on your child's level and ask them, "How can I play with you?" Following their lead will give you an amazing window into what they're thinking, feeling and experiencing. Alternatively, when you need to get un-stuck after a less pleasant interaction, start playing something on your own and invite your child to help you. Connecting through play is like speaking your child's love language – the more you practice, the easier it is to understand them.

3. **Listen!** Throughout the day, ask your child open-ended questions and then really listen to their responses. This might take the form of rhyming challenges, writing poems together by alternating lines, starting a story and asking your child to contribute the next part, and imagining different endings to games/books/stories. Having conversations throughout the day shows your child that you're interested in what they're thinking and that you value their ideas and opinions. Older children may enjoy journal sharing. This is an activity in which you and they share journal prompts back and forth. I've learned so much from my close-lipped 9-year-old this way!

If you're *reading, playing and having conversations* with your children every day, you're on track for meeting their needs and helping them feel connected, safe and secure. And that's what we all want for our children, right? So, while we at Audubon Naturalist Society miss you and have enjoyed connecting with you in new and different ways - and plan to continue to do so as our state begins to re-open in the coming weeks - what we really wish is for you to know that while we are apart, none of us is alone. Looking forward to "seeing you" soon!



Volunteer and retired teacher, Ann-Mari Gemmill, enjoys reading and connecting with a Nature Preschool student.



ANS Preschool Director Stephanie Bozzo plays and talks with three of her children while picnicking.

# Conservation



## ANS Policy and Advocacy News

### Regional

**COVID-19 is an Environmental Justice Crisis:** Our April Conservation Café speaker, Vernice Miller-Travis, is a longtime leader in the environmental justice movement. She also lives in Prince George's County, which is suffering the highest morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 in Maryland. In her April talk, she underscored the importance of the early evidence that lifetime exposure to air pollution – much more likely in low-income communities and communities of color – appears to be a risk factor for complications from COVID-19. This is not only a public health crisis, it is an equity and environmental justice crisis as well. *Watch Vernice's talk on the Conservation Blog.*

**The Trump Administration is Taking Advantage of the Pandemic to Roll Back Even More Environmental Rules:** 2018 Conservation Café speaker Nadja Popovich is one of the *New York Times* journalists tracking the nearly 100 environmental protection rollbacks so far during this Administration (see all of them at <https://nyti.ms/2L3Dbcl>). Just during the pandemic, the Trump EPA has completed its plans to weaken Obama-era fuel economy and greenhouse gas standards for passenger vehicles and effectively overturned an Obama-era rule that limited mercury emissions from coal power plants. We are seeing an abdication of concern for the health and future of American people and our environment, just when the Covid-19 pandemic underscores the importance of clean air and safe spaces in nature. Our work to strengthen local laws, regulations, and policies is all the more important in the face of this federal abandonment.

### Maryland

**Action Alert: *Thrive/Prospera 2050*** is Montgomery County Planning Department's campaign to revise and develop the county's New General Master Plan. This plan will guide decisions on transportation, housing, parkland, economic growth, and much more throughout the county for the next 30 years. The public is invited to submit comments now through June 18 on the Draft Vision and Goals Report. **Join Montgomery County Director of Planning Gwen Wright via a virtual zoom presentation on Thursday, June 11 from 6:30-8 pm to learn more about the Plan update and contribute your comments!** *Learn how you can submit your comments and become involved in *Thrive 2050* on the Conservation Blog.*

**Action Alert: Beltway & I-270 widening Draft Environmental Impact Statement to be out this summer.** The Maryland Department of Transportation and State Highway Administration will be releasing the Managed Lanes (I-495 and I-270 up to I-370) Draft Environmental Impact Statement this June with a tentative open commenting period of 45 days until public hearings in both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties for the first weeks in July. **Sign up for our Action Alerts at <http://conservationblog.anshome.org> to stay informed with the latest updates.**

### D.C.

**Action Alert: 2021 Budget Released:** Mayor Muriel Bowser recently released her planned budget for fiscal year 2021 and submitted it to the D.C. Council for approval. The public is encouraged to comment and offer testimony. Let's make sure that crucial environmental programs are funded! *Get updates and learn how to submit comments on the Conservation Blog.*

**Anacostia River Sediment Project:** In March, ANS submitted comments on the Anacostia River Sediment Project Proposed Plan and Feasibility Study. This plan takes a major step towards removing one of the major barriers to a full cleanup of the Anacostia: the toxic chemicals buried in layers of silt under the riverbed. The District Department of Energy and Environment plans to start by tackling 11 hot spots. We have our fingers crossed that this will work, but also want to make sure that sites upstream of those hot spots are remediated. *Learn more and read our comments on the Conservation Blog.*

**Read more detail about all these stories, and more,  
on our blog:  
<http://conservationblog.anshome.org>**



# Conservation



## Virginia

**Fairfax County Moves Forward with the Community Energy & Climate Action Plan:** The County's brand-new Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination is leading a collaborative initiative, involving county staff, a consultant, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), community businesses, organizations, and residents, in establishing goals and strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The County is exploring ways to keep the rich discussion going during the current health crisis as a way to reduce the impact of climate-related events.

**What a Year for the Virginia General Assembly!** This was a year like no other. 2020 was the first time since 1993 that Democrats controlled the state legislature, presenting opportunities to pursue legislation driving environmental progress. Read about the biggest wins this year, including Virginia joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, securing the ability to increase distributed solar capacity and tax plastic bag usage, and a significant number of environmental justice bills. *More on the Conservation Blog.*

**Fairfax City Moves to Build on Top of the North Fork of Accotink Creek:** This is the kind of heartbreaking story you can't make up. On an April site visit to the Northfax West area of Fairfax City, a barred owl hooted from the woods. This 4+ acres of forest at the end of Orchard Street are currently proposed to be paved over, burying the North Fork of Accotink Creek underground, to allow for increased developable area. This property is in a major activity center of the city, at the intersection of two major roads, off of I-66. This the right place for denser development. However, we cannot develop at the expense of precious clean water and valuable green space. ANS is working with city residents and the Friends of Accotink Creek to make recommendations for a different approach that will achieve both the city's land use and environmental goals. *Learn more on the Conservation Blog.*

## Online Workshops & Events

Learn more and register for all events below at [anshome.org/conservation-events](https://anshome.org/conservation-events).

**Wednesday, June 3 (3 pm) & Thursday, July 9 (7 pm): Couch Advocacy 101: How to Be an Environmental Advocate During a Pandemic.** In April, we held our first ever online advocacy workshop, and it was a huge success, selling out with over 50 registrants! We're holding this workshop again in June and July to help meet the demand for training on how to fight for the environment during this difficult time, especially in our local DMV jurisdictions. You'll learn how to talk about the intersections between Covid-19 and climate change, environmental justice, and how to make your voice heard by local government. Each of our DC, MD, and VA Advocates will lead a breakout session drilling down into key local issues and strategies. Sliding scale \$5-\$15.

**Thursday, June 11: Environmental Briefing: Get Involved with Thrive Montgomery 2050.** Join Montgomery County Planning Director Gwen Wright and planning staff to learn about the General Plan Update process, see the revised Goals and Policies, and submit your comments. Get involved in the long-term vision for land use, the environment, transportation, equity, and more! Virtual zoom presentation, 6:30-8 pm. FREE.

**Wednesday, June 17: Watershed Community Action 101.** We can act locally to create positive change in our communities. Join us to learn some key introductory advocacy skills, think about your own community, begin developing your own action plan, and participate in breakout discussions. Homeowner and Condo Associations have a great deal of control over things like landscaping, lawn maintenance, and stormwater management. These sessions will help you build skills to work with and within your community to improve environmental stewardship. 7-8:30 pm. Sliding scale \$5-\$15.



**Conservation Café update: Cafés will take a break this summer. Check your eNews in case we add one, and join us in September! In the meantime, check out the new Naturalist Hour featuring amazing scientists and naturalists, p 30.**

Photo by Judy Fraser



ANS fights to protect this precious forest patch at Northfax West.



facebook.com/audubonnaturalistsociety

# Children and Nature Photos



Students from our Amazing Animals Kindergarten and 1st Grade Camp enjoy bonding during a break on the branch of a tree at Woodend Nature Sanctuary. Photo by Ben Israel.



An Amazing Animals camp counselor shares with a camper the delights of a frog. Photo by Ben Israel.



Rock Creek Conservancy partnered with the ANS Creek Critters program to host this mini bioblitz, being enjoyed by community members from different generations. Photo by Gregg Trilling.

# Early Childhood Programs

You and your kids can unplug and explore nature every day at Woodend and Rust Nature Sanctuaries, open dawn to dusk, for free, 365 days a year. Our trained naturalists and excellent volunteers are eager to introduce children to nature through the Audubon Nature Preschool, Summer Camp, Nature Birthday Parties, Family Programs, and at your child's school through School Programs and GreenKids. When we have permission to gather again, consider having your PTA or PTO sponsor a nature activity for your school!

## Video Resources for Teachers, Parents, and Children

We miss being outdoors with our friends of all ages! Until we can explore the outdoors together again, our staff have been hard at work developing these on-line resources for you to continue learning from home. All these videos can be found on our ANS YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/user/audubonnaturalist> and organized under the follow playlists:



- Nature Discoveries: Our naturalists share outdoor discoveries from their own neighborhoods and parks.
- Discover Your Garden: Our gardening experts share tips and techniques for growing gardens at home.
- Garbology: Our educators share a variety of lessons, stories, and crafts exploring the "Science of Garbage."
- Audubon Nature Preschool: For younger children, our ANP staff have created three playlists with fun stories, songs, and activities: Storytime, Nature Connections, and Sing Along Nature Songs.



## Summer Camp

Please check our website at [www.anshome.org/summer-camps](http://www.anshome.org/summer-camps) often throughout the summer for updates on our camp offerings as well as new options we will be making available as we weather this pandemic.



## CONGRATULATIONS to our MCPS GreenKids Schools!

Our award-winning GreenKids program, supported by Howard Hughes Medical Institute, provides participating public schools with two years of free resources and field experiences to foster environmental literacy and help build the next generation of science and environmental champions. We continue to provide professional development support for teachers, as well as resources such as our Salad Science program, to many of these alumni schools. It is wonderful to see how our alumni schools continue to maintain their commitment to being green!

We are so proud of the following GreenKids “graduates” who earned prestigious levels of Maryland Green School awards in Spring 2020. Their year of completing the two-year GreenKids program is indicated in parentheses:

### First-time Maryland Green School awards:

Kemp Mill ES (2020)  
Wheaton Woods ES (2020)

### First Recertifications as Maryland Green Schools:

Belmont ES (2020)  
Fox Chapel ES (2016)  
Glenallan ES (2016)  
Montgomery Knolls ES (2016)

### Second Recertifications as Maryland Green Schools:

Arcola ES (2011)  
Beverly Farms ES (2010)  
Captain James E. Daly, Jr. ES (2012)  
Highland View ES (2012)  
Lakewood ES (2012)  
Summit Hall ES (2012)  
Takoma Park ES (2012)

### Sustainable Green Schools:

Cedar Grove ES (2012)  
Chevy Chase ES (2008)  
Clarksburg ES (2008)



*Students from GreenKids alumni school, Glenallan Elementary, enjoy meeting a frog during a BioBlitz we conducted in partnership with MCPS, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, and Montgomery Parks. Photo by Diane Lill.*

## Audubon Nature Preschool

The Audubon Nature Preschool features programs for children ages 6 years and younger. Children benefit from exploring the natural surroundings of the 40-acre sanctuary, which offer endless opportunities for investigation and discovery.

The Audubon Nature Preschool builds on children’s inherent curiosity about the world by using hands-on, nature-based activities to foster social, physical, and academic skill development.

All Nature Preschool programs run September-May. Visit [anshome.org/ans-preschool](http://anshome.org/ans-preschool) for more info or call Preschool Director Stephanie Bozzo at 301-652-9188 x32.



## Returning Nature's Favor

by Cecily Nabors



Photo of Cecily Nabors by Julie Small

This spring, a virus upturned our lives. During the days of pandemic isolation, many of us went to nature to for calm and comfort.

On the Matthew Henson Trail, which bisects my neighborhood, people smiled as we (safely) passed each other. We acknowledged our common pleasure in simply being outside, exercising our bodies while resting our anxious minds. Over the weeks, as spring unfolded in rain-washed air, the goddess Flora scattered her wildflowers. Starry spring beauties and rue anemones glorified the woods. Even the invasive lesser celandine choking the banks of Bel Pre Creek annoyed me less this year; its bright yellow flowers lifted the spirit.

In my small neighborhood park, tall trees took on a shimmer of green, a balm to wounded hearts. Pickerel frogs uttered their grunting snores in the wetlands and robins searched the forest floor. Northern watersnakes emerged from their cold sleeps to bask on warm rocks by the bridge.

When I found this year's red-shouldered hawks' nest near the creek, it brought me great joy, with its added reassurance of a normal world. I showed people that nest, and we rejoiced together in healing thoughts of new life beginning.

Will we remember the solace of nature when we've emerged from this pandemic into a new normal?

The virus, an unthinking jumble of RNA, altered our lives. The lives of Earth's creatures were already being altered by unthinking, or uncaring, humans. We're now acting individually and collectively to mitigate our virus problem, but plants and animals are less able to adjust to the changes we've brought to the world. We have a new debt to pay to nature. Let's summon the strength, individually and collectively, to fight human-accelerated climate change.

I'm trying. This spring, with the help of Backyard Bounty, we've removed invasives, added native plants, and installed two conservation landscapes in our yard. It's a small return for nature's favors.

Good news: near Bel Pre Creek, two downy babies are now peering from the red-shouldered hawks' nest. The parent birds tend the youngsters, loyal to the next generation. They give us a model of stewardship, steadfastness, and hope. May we be as loyal to the next generations of the Earth.

*Cecily Nabors is an ANS member who has coordinated our Natural History Field Studies program for 15 years—a significant volunteer contribution of time and talent for which we are exceedingly grateful. She's also a member of the Green Quill nature-writing group, and has participated in (and written about) many of our nature travel trips during her long tenure as a member.*



Rue Anemones by Cecily Nabors



Photo of Red-shouldered Hawk by Cecily Nabors

## The Wild Kingdom is Closer Than We Think - and on Video



by **Serenella Linares,**  
**School Programs Manager**

Wild places are closer than you think. That's not just a historical truth or an ANS slogan.

During these challenging times, everything has slowed down and I have allowed nature to become an even bigger part of my daily experience.

I'm not able to roam as far and

wide as I might like to, but I truly don't need to go far to find the beauty or healing properties of nature. What's more, as the School Programs Manager, I have the privilege to work with an amazing team of environmental educators who are spending their days, and some nights, looking around our neighborhoods and nearby nature sanctuaries to find the wildest and most wonderful living things to share with teachers, children and families via our Facebook and YouTube platforms. Here are just a few of what you'll find on our *YouTube* Nature Discoveries playlist.

**Wood fern fiddleheads**, that look like the tops of violins and cellos, are growing in forests and gardens all around the DMV. The beauties you'll see in our video were grown in the front yard garden of one of our educators in Kensington, Maryland. Unlike flowering plants, ferns reproduce by spores instead of seeds. Like many other plants, their roots help stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

**Tiger swallowtail butterflies**, or *mariposa tigre del este* in Spanish, have parties! The males of the species will congregate by muddy spots around the river banks to drink water from the soil. By doing so, they are also drinking salts and minerals that will help them survive. This is one of the largest species of butterflies in U.S.! Its



Photo by Serenella Linares

wings can expand to 5.5 inches. Although our video was filmed in Glen Arm Maryland, you can attract them to your garden, and in the video we tell you how.

The **Northern cricket frog** is a tiny and intriguing creature! At an average of 1.6 inches, these miniature amphibians can hop daily up to 100 meters. That's the equivalent of three miles! Found recently at the Patuxent Research Wildlife Refuge, *las ranas grillo Norteñas* (their name in Spanish) inhabit marshes and grassy areas, and are a great indicator of good water quality.

We hope you'll check out Nature Discoveries and other ANS environmental videos at [YouTube.com/audubonnaturalist](https://www.youtube.com/audubonnaturalist) (and please subscribe), and then look on your own for some of these species in your neck of the woods.



Photo by Alison Pearce

# Adult Nature Programs

These programs offer nature novices and experienced naturalists alike an array of opportunities to explore and learn about our area's natural history. All programs are led by experienced naturalists. Lectures are held at Woodend Sanctuary. Field trips are reached by private vehicle or carpool.

*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.
- Want to become an ANS member and get the member rate? Join at the same time you register for a program.
- Questions? Call Pam at 301-652-9188 x16 or email [pam.oves@anshome.org](mailto:pam.oves@anshome.org).

See page 17 or go to [anshome.org/covid-19](http://anshome.org/covid-19) for our Update on COVID-19 as it Relates to our Summer Programs.

## Geology at Flag Ponds

Wednesday, June 3 (1-6 pm)

Leader: Joe Marx

Members \$32; nonmembers \$44

Maryland's Flag Ponds Nature Park, next to the Chesapeake near the southern end of Calvert Cliffs, contains landscape features more dynamic than most in our region. Two longshore currents converge there, forming a promontory called a cusplate foreland. The freshwater ponds and marshes that give their name to the park are bits of the bay cut off by a steady southward migration of the foreland. Even the shape of the cliffs is affected by the sandy promontory, with beach-protected slopes only half as steep as those exposed to direct wave action. *We will walk two or three miles over relatively flat terrain.* The beach is loaded with fossils and collecting is permitted.

## Advanced Odonate Studies: Common Damselflies of the Mid-Atlantic

Thursday, June 11 (7:30-9:30)

Sunday, June 14 (3/4-day field trip)

Leaders: Lisa Shannon and Richard Orr

Members \$46; nonmembers \$64

Lecture only members \$24; nonmembers \$34

Feel like you're ready to "graduate" from our annual "Introduction to Dragons and Damsels" class? Join us for this advanced workshop focusing on the field ID of the common damselflies of the Mid-Atlantic region. Naturalist Lisa Shannon will deliver our evening's illustrated lecture. She'll be joined on the field trip to the North Tract of the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge by dragonfly expert Richard Orr where the group will work on field ID of these small, brightly-colored dragonfly "cousins."

## A Year at Theodore Roosevelt Island

A: Budbreak and Spring Wildflower Walk, Wednesday, June 10 (10 am-2 pm)

B: Summer Kayaking Trip, Wednesday, July 29 (10 am-1:30 pm)

C: Autumn Tree Walk, Wednesday, November 4 (10 am-2 pm)

D: Late Autumn Tree Walk, Wednesday, December 2 (10 am-2 pm)

Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley

Each walk members \$28; nonmembers \$38

Entire series \$101/\$137

Join Melanie Choukas-Bradley, author of *Resilience: Connecting with Nature in a Time of Crisis* and the forthcoming *Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island* (August 2020), for a year-long 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! During summer, we'll kayak around the island, launching from Key Bridge Boathouse on the Georgetown waterfront. We'll paddle under the island's graceful silver maples and sycamores, get close to the summer wildflowers along the shore, and watch herons, egrets, wood ducks and—hopefully—the noisy kingfisher! As a bonus, we'll be treated to stunning views of the Lincoln Memorial and the "City of Trees" on the horizon. Our fall tree walks will take us deep into the swamp and tidal inlet along the boardwalk where willows, bald-cypresses and cattails frame views of the city behind it. Melanie will share details of the island's fascinating history during this year-long exploration and we'll witness the ebb and flow of the Potomac tides along with the changing seasons. *Fee for trip B does not include canoe or kayak rental.*



## Fern Basics

**Saturday, June 13 (9 am-Noon)**

**Leader: Kit Sheffield**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

Walk the moderate trails of Riverbend Park, home to at least fifteen fern species, with a naturalist who knows this area well. We'll ID what we find, and along the way learn what it is that makes a plant a fern, plus the common characteristics you can use to identify ferns on your own. *Note: there will be some uphill/downhill on this hike of several miles.*

## Summer Shuffles Along the Canal

**Wednesdays (9-11:30 am)**

**Section A: June 17 - Pennyfield Lock**

**Section B: July 1 - Riley's Lock**

**Section C: July 15 - Carderock**

**Section D: July 29 - Swain's Lock**

**Each walk members \$25; nonmembers \$35**

**Entire series \$90/\$126**

Summer's here and it may be hot, so we'll keep our pace to a shuffle as we visit four areas along the Potomac River and the C&O Canal. We'll stop often to observe birds, wildflowers, butterflies, dragonflies, snakes, and whatever else we may find underfoot or overhead. Carpooling will be available from Woodend.

## Botany by Nose

**Friday, June 19 (9:30 am-1 pm)**

**Leader: Carole Bergmann**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

While most of us rely on visual clues to identify the plants that comprise our landscape, our sense of smell can be an important, complementary tool. Anyone who has broken a Spicebush or Black Birch twig can confirm that. Our outdoor classroom will be Little Bennett Regional Park near Clarksburg, MD, as we "scratch and sniff" our way through woodland and wetland habitats.

## COVID-19 Update Adult Nature Programs

As of press time, we are not conducting adult nature program field trips in accordance with the "stay at home" and physical distancing orders from area governments due to the current pandemic. Summer field trips remain in question given uncertainties about covid-19s persistence and government's policies to address the concern. However, since our programs have already been planned through August, we are listing them with the hope that conditions might change as the summer unfolds. ANS will communicate any changes regarding this status as soon as we know more and feel that we can conduct field trips safely. Keep an eye on our website, our monthly eNews and our Facebook page for updates.



@ANSNature

## Summer Walks on the Wild Side

**(8-11:30 am)**

**A. Saturday, June 20 - Blue Mash Nature Trail, MD**

**B. Sunday, July 5 - Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens (DC)**

**C. Saturday, August 1 - Huntley Meadows Park (VA)**

**Each Walk: Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

**Entire Series: Members \$70; nonmembers \$97**

Join one of our talented naturalists to explore the summer richness of parks in the DC-Metro area. As summer arrives and brings with it long, hot, muggy days and nights, wetlands and meadows soak up the sunlight and come alive with plant and wildlife activity. We'll explore these open habitats with walks of up to 2-3 miles at a slow summer pace. We'll search for birds, butterflies, dragonflies, reptiles, amphibians, and summer plant life on natural surface paths and boardwalk.

## Bluebells and Budbreak at Boundary Bridge

**Saturday, June 20 (9:30 am-2 pm)**

**Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley**

**Members \$28; nonmembers \$38**

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 14th year of nature walks for ANS in the country's oldest urban national park. On our walk, we will witness the annual floral miracle of Virginia bluebells, spring beauties, and trout lilies in the floodplain forest, as we admire 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 spring ephemerals in bloom as we explore both floodplain and upland woods at a leisurely pace. Our lunch stop (bring your own lunch), high above the creek on a dramatic rock outcrop offering, will offer spectacular views. Here, we'll do a bit of "forest bathing," time permitting. Throughout, we'll keep our eyes and ears open for belted kingfishers, wood ducks, migrating songbirds, and tiny spring peepers.

## Firefly Fling

**Thursday, June 25 (8-9:30 pm)**

**Free, but registration required.**

As dusk descends, come and enjoy nature's fireworks—the courting of fireflies over our Woodend fields and forests. The evening begins with a short discussion of the life history and behavior of these luminescent beetles. We'll then move outdoors to observe the various flash and light patterns of different species and try to "communicate" with these insects ourselves.

**FREE**

**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.**



Variegated Fritillary

## Butterflies of Early Summer

**Sunday, June 28 (10 am-2 pm)**

**Leader: Tom Stock**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

The varied habitats of the vast Little Bennett Regional Park near Clarksburg, MD are the setting for our search for early summer butterflies, their host plants, and their nectar resources. Species such as American Copper, Great Spangled Fritillary, Little Wood Satyr, Summer Azure, and Little Glassywing are possible, just to name a few. Field conditions will include open areas with possibly tall vegetation, and some bushwhacking necessary for access. Bring along your closefocusing binoculars to benefit most from this outing.

## Six-legged Songsters of Summer

**Wednesday, July 8 (7:30-9:30 pm)**

**Leader: Cathy Stragar**

**Free, but registration is required**

**FREE**

Sticky summer has arrived, and the songs of insects such as cicadas, crickets, and katydids begin to swell into a noisy and riotous chorus. Join naturalist Cathy Stragar at our Woodend Sanctuary for a slide introduction to the most common of these songsters: who they are, why they sing, and how they make their amazing sounds. She'll also describe how to get involved with the eighth annual Cricket Crawl citizen science activity in late August.

### Where is Stephanie this summer?

*Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason is planning on participating in community science research on butterflies in Colorado all summer, COVID-19 permitting. Field trips that she normally leads will be led by other talented and engaging ANS Naturalists.*

## Art and Nature Journaling

**Saturday, July 11 (10 am-1:30 pm)**

**Leader: Tina Thieme Brown**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

Create an art journal page under the guidance of the artist of the Sugarloaf Mountain books and the illustrated Agricultural Reserve Map. Following a short stroll looking closely at nature, participants will share observations of native trees along the trail. Tina will show you how to create an art journal page using sketches and handwritten notes that reflect your walk in the woods. The only experience required is a love for our native woodland trees. Site for this outdoor drawing workshop will be Black Hill Regional Park. A list of art supplies will be provided with the confirmation letter.

## On the Wing at Lilypons

**Saturday, July 11 (8 am-Noon)**

**Rain date: July 12 (8 am-Noon)**

**Leader: Tom Stock**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

Because of its on-site manmade ponds combined with adjacent open fields and riparian woodlands along the Monocacy River and Bennett Creek, Lilypons Water Gardens in Frederick County attracts an abundance of bird species in all seasons. Its varied habitats can also be a productive spot for summer butterfly watching, according to our leader. Join him for a morning walk in search of both birds and butterflies—wings feathered and scaled, respectively—as he shares tips for field ID of the species we encounter. Don't forget your binoculars!

## Wonders at Woodend: Forest Bathing through the Seasons

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

**Section C: July 15**

**Section D: October 14**

**Leader: Melanie Choukas-Bradley**

**Each walk members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

Savor the natural joys of each season on forest bathing walks led by Melanie Choukas-Bradley, a longtime ANS field trip leader and the author of *The Joy of Forest Bathing—Reconnect with Wild Places & Rejuvenate Your Life*. 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. Our leader is a Nature & Forest Therapy Guide with certification from the Association of Nature & Forest Therapy Guides and Programs of Sonoma County, California. Experience the restoration of Woodend as we explore and commune with the living things in our meadows, forest, and Blair Garden. A serving of maple sap "tea" and a sharing of nature poetry will conclude each walk.

Photo by Dirck Harris



## Dragons of the Air

**Saturday, July 18 (9-11:30 am)**

**Raindate: Sunday, July 19**

**Leader: Lisa Shannon**

**Members \$24; nonmembers \$34**

The wetlands around Pine Lake in Wheaton Regional Park, MD, are an ideal spot to start learning how to ID the most common dragonflies in our area. Naturalist Lisa Shannon will help beginning dragonfly enthusiasts focus on identifying characteristics, as well as the life histories, of these aerial insects. Close-focusing binoculars are recommended for optimal dragon-watching.

## Summer Morning in the Hollow

**Sunday, July 26 (8-11:30 am)**

**Leader: Cathy Stragar**

**Members \$26; nonmembers \$36**

The McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area near Poolesville, MD—affectionately known as Hughes Hollow by its enthusiasts—is alive with wildlife sights and sounds during the long, hot, muggy days of July. Enjoy a slow stroll through and around the field, forest, and wetland habitats here in search of summer insect life and all manner of seasonal animal activity and plant life.

## How Does Her Garden Grow?

**Wednesday, August 5 (10-11:30 am)**

**Leader: Marney Bruce**

**Members \$24; nonmembers \$34**

Here's your chance to visit the home garden of an ANS member who has worked to reduce lawn coverage, increase food and shelter for wildlife, and incorporate native plants whenever possible. Marney will share her successes and failures on a stroll through her yard, which includes sun-loving plants in the front, shade-loving species in the back, and a water feature. Our destination garden is located in the Bethesda, MD vicinity. *Participants will meet at our Woodend Sanctuary at 9:45 to carpool over to Marney's home, where parking is limited. Limited 10 participants.*

## Introduction to Dragonflies and Damselflies

**Thursday, August 6 (7:30-9:30 pm)**

**Sunday, August 9 (3/4 day field trip)**

**Leaders: Lisa Shannon and Richard Orr**

**Members \$46; nonmembers \$64**

**Lecture only \$24/\$34**

Grab your binoculars and prepare to set your sights not on birds—although “mosquito hawk” is a common moniker—but on those six-legged, aerial acrobats of wetland habitats: the dragonflies and damselflies. At our evening lecture, Lisa Shannon will discuss ID, biology, and behavior of the more common species of Odonates in our area. Dragonfly expert Richard Orr will join her on our field trip to the Patuxent Research Refuge (North Tract) near Bowie, MD, where everyone will have a chance to test their identification skills.

## Intro to the Natural History and ID of Shorebirds

**Thursday, August 6 (7:30-9:30 pm)**

**Saturday, August 8 (full-day field trip)**

**Leaders: Cyndie Loeper and Paul Pisano**

**Members \$50; nonmembers \$70**

**Lecture only \$24/\$34**

Shorebirds are among the most spectacular migrants of the avian world. Many species breed as far north as the Arctic tundra and winter as far south as Patagonia. In this advanced session, our leaders will review the natural histories of shorebirds and offer ID pointers in the classroom part of the workshop. On the field trip to Delaware's Bombay Hook, we'll encounter the more difficult plumages of this time of year, including juveniles. Our August date will give us chances for rarities, such as Baird's Sandpiper, and “grasspipers”, such as American Golden Plover and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Although the IDs can be more challenging in late summer, beginners who wish to experience the great diversity of species in southbound migration are welcome to sign up.

## Summer Fungus Walk

**Saturday, August 8 (9-11 am)**

**Leader: Serenella Linares**

**Members \$24; nonmembers \$34**

Summer is a great time to get introduced to the most common families of fungi in our area and find out more about their natural history and many ecological functions. We'll visit a variety of habitats at our Woodend Sanctuary using natural surface trails. Note: the focus of our field trip is fungi's important and under-appreciated role in forest ecology, not the edibility of particular species of mushrooms.



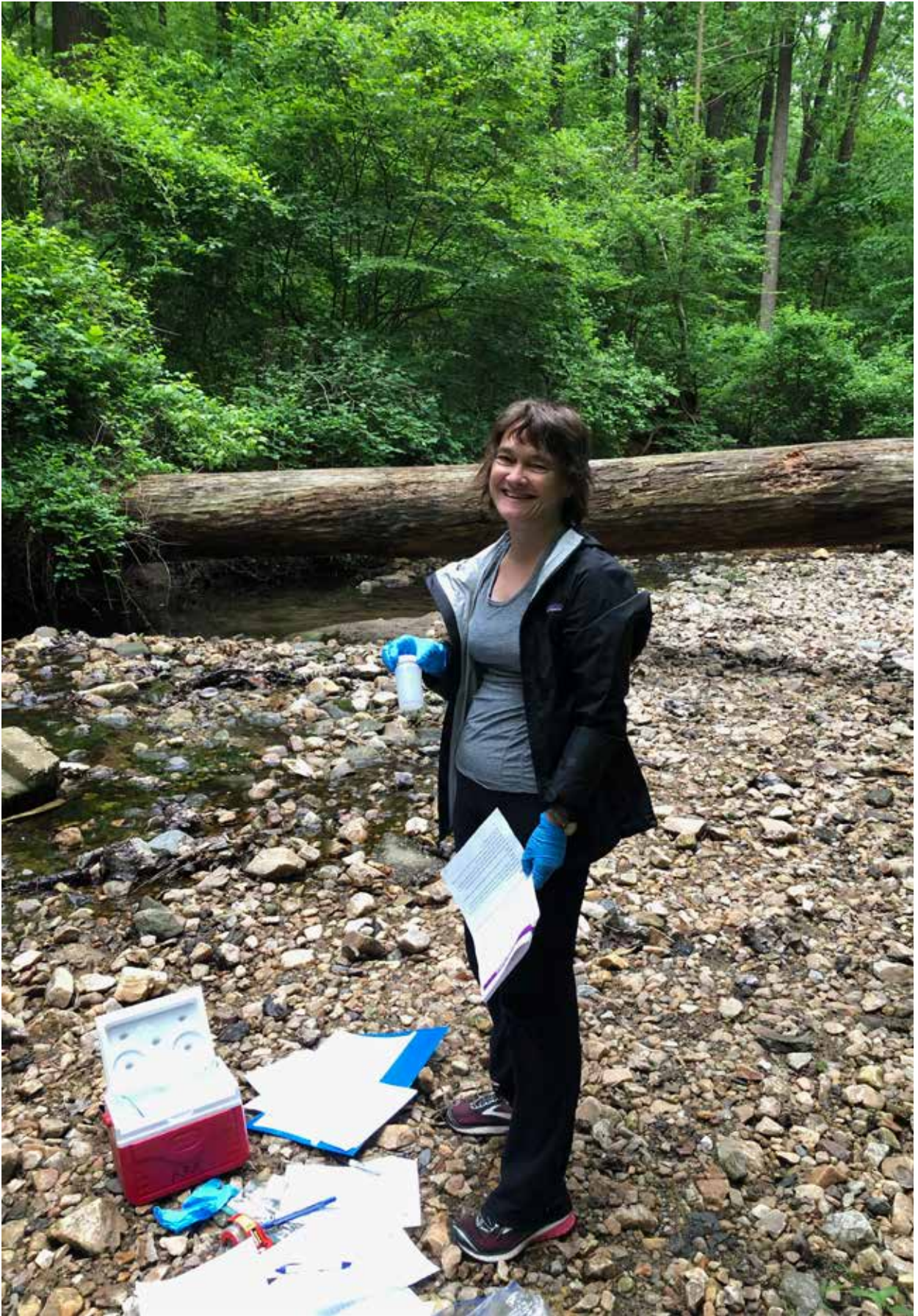
# Adults and Nature Photos



D.C. bacteria monitoring. Photo by Eliza Cava.



Red salamander ar Ten Mile Creek. Photo by Cathy Wiss.



D.C. bacteria monitoring. Photo by Eliza Cava.



Please check out our Facebook page at [www.Facebook.com/AudubonNaturalistSociety](http://www.Facebook.com/AudubonNaturalistSociety) for the many remarkable nature photos and postings that Stephanie is creating from her walks in nature around the region, as well as those shared with her by ANS members and friends.

## Gathering Mosses

by Stephanie Mason, Senior Naturalist



Mosses must be loving this morning's rain (April 24). Although true plants, like an oak tree or a dandelion or a sensitive fern, mosses lack roots and a functioning indoor-plumbing system. Most plants leave the primary work of water absorption to their roots, but mosses rely almost completely on their leaves—generally only one cell thick—to absorb

raindrops quickly. Robin Kimmerer writes in "Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses" that "Each leaf is shaped to make a home for water." I recommend this award-winning book, available in our Naturalist Shop, which takes you deep into the Lilliputian world of mosses. I had to get down on my stomach to take this recent photo of Windswept broom moss (*Dicranum scoparium*) with its fruiting stalks in Great Falls Park, MD.



## All Hail the Queen – The Honey Bee Queen!

by Stephanie Mason, Senior Naturalist

**BEES BUZZ.** And in the springtime, it's common for honey bees to swarm. This dramatic activity, photographed by ANS member and neighbor Steve Sroka in May, is a natural part of the life cycle of these bees, which are non-native and tended for their honey and pollination services.

So what's going on here? Honey bees swarm when there is the need to create a new queen. The queen is needed for reproductive purposes, and a colony can only accommodate one. As the population of the bee workers increases into thousands upon thousands, many of them will no longer be able to have access to the one honey bee queen. Gradually, these physically-disconnected workers no longer receive the queen's pheromone (scent) signals, and they develop the sense that she doesn't exist anymore.

That's when worker bees respond to the need to create a new honey bee queen. Since a colony can't accommodate more than one queen, it's necessary for the old queen to leave the hive before a new queen can emerge. The worker bees move the queen away to settle down in a new location, which could be on a tree branch or other convenient location.

During the swarming, the bees fly in groups so all the workers can protect their queen while relocating. Along the way, the queen may need to rest at a temporary spot, while the swarming bees surround her. At every point, so-called scout bees will be sent out to look for an ideal location for the new honey bee colony.

# In Uncertain Times, New Videos for Growing Gardens and Gardeners

by Jenny Brown, Garden Programs Manager



As all of us at ANS floundered those first few weeks after the Stay-at-Home COVID-19 orders went into effect, wondering how to carry on inside with our work that normally takes place outside, I thought that perhaps, now, was an ideal time to share the joy I get from planting seeds and watching them grow.

So I ventured into the world of YouTube videos under the playlist Discover Your Garden! With short videos, I could encourage others to "try it, you might like it," as that famous cereal commercial used to say. So far,

I have made five videos to help folks sheltering at home or looking for release at the end of a workday away from home to try their hand at food gardening. There is so much information much I want to share, but my primary goal is to make it look easy, inexpensive and worth a try.



The first video, Growing Seeds, explains that spring is the perfect time to plant salad greens. The second explains how to use containers from the recycling bin and to fashion a seed-starting container from a toilet paper roll. The third extols the virtues of having an herb garden and the difference between perennial and annual herbs. The fourth explains the vast variety of beans, some that might found be right in household cupboards, and how easy they are to grow. The fourth lesson demonstrates that plants need more room and soil as they grow and how you safely can transplant them. As we head into late spring and summer, stay tuned for good spaces and times to plant squash, corn, and melons!

On the healthy habitat side, Restoration Director Alison Pearce is also spending more time in her native plant garden this year (pictured below). When she purchased her house 15 years ago, the previous owner had established towering trees and mature azalea shrubs. Over time, Alison replaced the turf lawn with deep-rooted native sedges, installed a dry creek bed, and rain garden, and nurtured as many native plants as the shade and deer population would allow. She's also documenting this season's efforts in short videos for Facebook and our YouTube channel's Discover Your Garden playlist. Check them out to learn about growing plants from seeds, tackling invasive weeds, transplanting May apples and more!

During this season of uncertainty, our fervent hope is that we will grow a few more gardeners.



## Partner Profile – Dr. David Asai, Senior Director for Science Education, Howard Hughes Medical Institute

by Lisa Alexander, Executive Director

*We're starting a new occasional series to highlight the generous people and partners who make ANS's mission work possible. Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) has been a long-time ANS funder, supporting teacher training programs, GreenKids, our Nature Play Space, and our Taking Nature Black Conference.*

If you've been taking your exercise at Woodend Sanctuary during stay-at-home orders, you might encounter a fellow walker admiring the redbud and fringe trees. This fascinating man leads the Undergraduate and Graduate Programs (UGP) at HHMI. Dr. David Asai's group designs and runs initiatives to support science education in the United States at the pre-college, undergraduate, medical school, and graduate levels. Check out their programs at <https://hhmi.org/developing-scientists>.

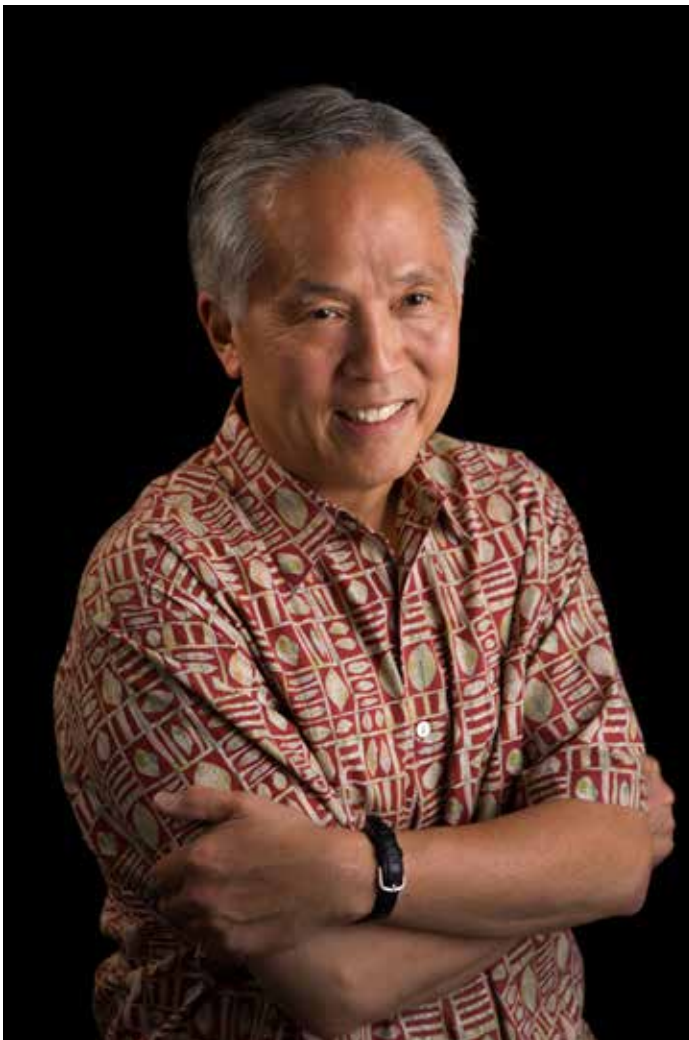


Photo of David Asai by Paul Fetters

David's path to leadership starts with his upbringing as a third-generation Japanese American whose parents met in an internment camp in Poston, Arizona. The work of David's father, a Christian minister, took the family around the country. As a young boy, David experienced both exclusion and welcome – from being picked on as the only non-white student in his Kansas school to enjoying the new pleasure of joining Asian American classmates in Hawaii.

David returned to the mainland to study at Stanford University and lived in its newly established Asian American house. As a senior, he joined *Students for Equity* who fought Stanford's attempt to step back from affirmative action. Through his activities as an undergraduate, David learned the value of building solidarity with people from diverse backgrounds to advance social justice.

Trained as a cell biologist, before joining HHMI, David was Head of Biological Sciences at Purdue University for 19 years and served as Chair of the Biology Department at Harvey Mudd College for the next five. His research focused on molecular motors in single-celled organisms, found in streams, lakes, and ponds, called Tetrahymena. (ANS water quality monitors, can you relate?!)

David and his researchers discovered that it took 25 of these microscopic motors, each producing slightly different motions, to propel the organism forward. Each little motor, made of the complex protein dynein, served a different function. And all 25 motors work together to move the Tetrahymena through the water. The motors are a good metaphor for the importance of diversity, David said. "We can't move ahead in science, research and medicine without inviting people with a wide range of experiences and skillsets to help propel knowledge forward."

David's work at HHMI emphasizes the value of diversity, inclusion and hands-on discovery by students. HHMI works with teachers, instructors and faculty to foster good and inclusive science. He has witnessed firsthand that "the experiences students of color are having in science classes are different from the experiences of their white classmates."

And that's where David sees the importance of HHMI's philanthropic work. HHMI identifies impactful organizations and funds on-the-ground experts to promote these important principles:

- Scientific excellence requires creative and innovative scientists.
- Creativity and innovation result from diversity.
- Diversity is effective only when the environment is inclusive.
- Inclusion is the responsibility of the institutions and not of the persons excluded from science.

David said he looks forward to working with ANS in the years ahead, helping us realize our aspirations for building new and diverse generations of environmental stewards and scientists. Next time you take a stroll at Woodend, keep your eye out for David and say *Thank You!* for supporting ANS's mission work.



## Volunteer Corner

**An occasional feature that highlights the many and varied opportunities and volunteers of ANS**

**by Mitch Greene, Volunteer Coordinator**

This quarter's spotlight is on a group of ten volunteers who formed the Conservation and Climate Change Task Force. The volunteers were chosen to represent diverse expertise, regional affiliations, demographics and sectors. This group worked hard—nearly 75 hours of meetings alone!—and have helped shape the future of ANS and our advocacy efforts.

Danielle Reyes, one member of the task force, took some time to answer some questions for me. (Edited for length and clarity.)

**Volunteer Corner:** What is your background?

**DR:** First and foremost, I am an avid outdoor enthusiast and nature lover. I am happiest outdoors and connect the outdoors to everything I do. Professionally, I work in the nonprofit sector in philanthropy, serving as the executive director of a private foundation. For many years I ran an outdoor fitness small business and engaged hundreds of people in wellness activities outdoors. Among other volunteer roles, I serve as a board member of Rock Creek Conservancy, which also works to address climate change.

**VC:** What were your most valuable lessons from working with the Conservation and Climate Change Task Force?

**DR:** I always find a lot of value in opportunities that allow me to engage on topics with people of different ages, personal/professional backgrounds. People connect to issues of climate change in a variety of ways: from their backyard, to their commute to work, all the way to advocating for legislation. It's important to find out what matters to people and then initiate and engage them in a climate-related conversation that builds off of their interests or concerns.

**VC:** How has working on this task force changed your behavior?

**DR:** As a non-scientist participant, working on the task force helped me become more familiar with the terminology and framing used to discuss the impact of climate change in various ways at the community level. The morning after one meeting, I attended a small breakfast meeting with a DC council member and asked him some very pointed climate and land use related questions that I might not have thought to ask before.

**VC:** What do you want to make sure people learn about your work?

**DR:** The staff at ANS were so thoroughly engaged in this work and take such a respectful approach to engaging individuals from various backgrounds. I want people to know that there was high attendance, diverse voices and opinions, and a lot of science-backed data shared that informed the work of the group.

Thank you, Danielle, and all the members of ANS's Conservation and Climate Change Task Force! Your dedication to ANS and your work with this group led to changes in our Strategic Plan, new Advocacy Campaign Guidelines, and new Priority Campaign areas. You have guided and focused our efforts, helped our Board of Directors make informed decisions about our future, and shaped how ANS will advocate for our environment. Your efforts reflect our values and are a testament to you and the wider Audubon Naturalist Society community.



Danielle Reyes

The task force members are:

**Board Members:** Scott Fosler (Task Force Chair), Alice Ewen, Gregg Petersen, and Larry Wiseman; **Members & Partners:** Anne Cottingham (member), Brent Bolin (Clean Water Action), Danielle Reyes (Yoga Hikes DC/Crimsonbridge Foundation), Laura Grape (Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District), Phillip Musegaas (Potomac Riverkeeper Network), and Shanita Rasheed (member)

To learn more about this group and their recommendations, please visit [www.anshome.org/conservation](http://www.anshome.org/conservation).

### Volunteer Opportunity to serve on ANS Board of Directors and ANS Committees

ANS is in search of a few good volunteer Board and Committee members.

This is a great opportunity for seasoned members to bring their expertise to ANS leadership and for young professionals to advance their careers. We are looking for people from all kinds of backgrounds with a shared passion for the natural world. Lawyers, policy experts, non-profit accounting professionals, local business leaders, communications professionals, organizational development professionals and those with experience with educational technology are of particular interest.

If you would like to be considered for Board and other leadership service, please contact [Jacky.Wershba@anshome.org](mailto:Jacky.Wershba@anshome.org).





The Eastern Ribbon Snake (*Thamnophis saurita*) is a semiaquatic snake found in a variety of wet habitats. It is hard to catch and, if caught, hard to hold onto, but it seldom bites. Ribbon snakes can be told from garter snakes by their more slender build, longer tail, plain white lower face, and the presence of a white spot in front of the eye. They eat amphibians, invertebrates, and fish, which make them susceptible to pesticides and other pollutants. Photo taken by Jonathan Higman at McKee-Beshers WMA in Montgomery County, MD.



This two-inch baby Painted Turtle was photographed at Black Hill Regional Park, Boyds, MD, on April 13. Given the date, this cutie had to be a hatchling from last year. Female Painted Turtles don't leave their ponds to deposit their eggs on land until late spring through early summer. The untended eggs typically hatch out in August or September, but hatchlings often overwinter in their underground nest. This is probably the story for this little turtle. Painted Turtles are our most common species, and they are often seen basking in big groups on sunny days. This species can be identified by the two yellow spots behind each eye, only one of which is visible on this hatchling. Photo by Pam Oves.



Crested iris bloomed throughout Woodend's native plant gardens this spring. Photo by Ben Israel.

# Stream Science Classes & Water Monitoring

For more than 25 years, the Audubon Naturalist Society 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! Our classes are taught by our Maryland Biological Stream Survey-certified instructor Cathy Wiss. To learn more about the classes or becoming a volunteer, contact Cathy.Wiss@anshome.org or visit [www.anshome.org/water-quality-monitoring](http://www.anshome.org/water-quality-monitoring). Class format (virtual or in-person) will be determined by government guidance.

## Registration & Fee Information

Registration required: register online at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults). The classes are open to anyone 10 years and older. Prices for all classes are \$15 Members/\$25 Nonmembers. Waivers are available for those currently in the ANS monitoring program and for middle school and high school students earning SSL credit through their school systems. Check [anshome.org/covid-19](http://anshome.org/covid-19) for updates.

## Introduction to Stream Science Series



Recommended for volunteer water monitors

### Classroom Session

#### Healthy Stream Biology

Section C: Tuesday, June 2 (7-9:30 pm)

This class will be streamed online through Zoom

In the classroom, we will explore how “benthic macroinvertebrates” – organisms that live in the bottom of streams – help us assess a stream’s health. Through a PowerPoint presentation and videos, we will learn how to identify these organisms to the taxonomic level of order.

### Field Workshop

Section B: Saturday, June 6 (9:30 am-12 pm)

Ten Mile Creek, Boyds, MD



*All participants will be required to wear face coverings and practice physical distancing. This class will be cancelled if the Montgomery County stay-at-home order is still in effect.*

In the field workshop, we will visit a stream to practice monitoring techniques and to collect and identify the macroinvertebrates we find.

## How to Read Your Stream



Tuesday, June 16 (7-9:30 pm)

This class will be streamed online through Zoom

Learn about stream character and dynamics, the importance of riffles and riparian vegetation, and the effects of land use on streams. We will use photographs of streams and the forms that monitors fill out in the field to practice assessing stream habitat.

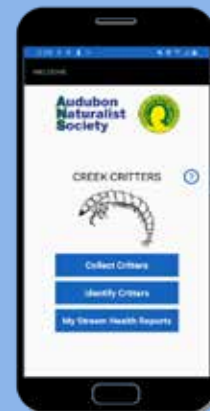
## Volunteer Bacteria Monitoring in Washington, DC

For the second year, ANS has joined the Anacostia Riverkeeper and other organizations to monitor Rock Creek and the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers to determine the health risks of contact with the water. Once D.C. stay-at-home orders are lifted, and with safety protocols in place, every Wednesday morning from May to September, or Thursday in the event of rain, volunteer monitors will collect water samples to be analyzed in the Anacostia Riverkeeper’s lab for E. Coli, fecal coliform, and turbidity. Volunteers will also test pH, measure water temperature and air temperature, and describe physical characteristics like weather and water flow. Monitoring results will be posted weekly at <https://www.theswimguide.org/>.

Email [cathy.wiss@anshome.org](mailto:cathy.wiss@anshome.org) to get involved!

## CREEK CRITTERS: Give It A Try!

ANS released an updated version of our CREEK CRITTERS® app that will help you monitor the health of local streams using your smartphone. If you already have the app, please download the latest version. If you don’t have the app, give it a try! You can use it with your family or “pod” for socially-distant outdoor recreation and science learning in streams this summer.



CREEK CRITTERS® is available as a FREE download from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

CREEK CRITTERS® makes it easy to find and identify the fascinating aquatic organisms that live in local streams. Use Creek Critters to report on local stream health today!

The update includes:

- New keys and lots of new photos for easier critter ID.
- Order-level identification options for dragonflies, damselflies, mayflies and caddisflies.
- Refined stream health scoring for more accurate reports.

ANS is excited about our new partnership with the Izaak Walton League of America to use CREEK CRITTERS® to engage and educate people in our region and beyond! Watch for news about connections to IWLA’s Clean Water Initiatives, including the “Clean Water Hub.”

# Free Birding Trips June-September

These free, volunteer-led walks offer birders a chance to explore new areas with other birding enthusiasts. Visit [ANShome.org/adults](http://ANShome.org/adults) for complete directions, additional trips, and more information. Turn to page 16 for the list of fee-based, instructional classes and field trips for beginning to mid-level birders. Register online at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults).

## COVID-19 Update Free Birding Trips

As of press time, we are not conducting adult nature program field trips in accordance with the “stay at home” and physical distancing orders from area governments due to the pandemic. However, since June programs have already been planned, we are listing them along with September programs. If July and August programs can be run, we will advertise them on our website. ANS will communicate any changes regarding this status as soon as we know more and feel that we can conduct field trips safely. Keep an eye on our website, our monthly eNews and our Facebook page for updates.

### Saturday, September 19 Snickers Gap Hawkwatch (between Bluemont & Berryville, VA)

Joint trip with Montgomery Bird Club. Peak time for Broad-winged Hawks. **Meet time/place:** 10 am at the commuter lot at VA 7 and VA 601. Joan Boudreau and Bob Abrams will lead. Bring scopes, tripods, chairs, and packed lunch. For more information, contact the leaders at [icepeep@aol.com](mailto:icepeep@aol.com) or 703-282-9495 (cell).



### Wednesday, September 30 Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA

See June 24 listing for details.

## JUNE

### Saturday, June 6 Little Bennett Regional Park, Montgomery Co., MD

Half day. Nesting songbirds, possibly including Yellow-breasted Chat, Willow Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, and Kentucky Warbler. **Meet time/place:** 7:30 am at Kingsley Trail parking area. Insect repellent highly advised, as is waterproof footwear. Extra water and sunscreen also recommended. For more info, contact the leader, Paul DeAnna, at 202-544-2680 or [ppdeanna47@gmail.com](mailto:ppdeanna47@gmail.com) (10-person limit).

### Saturday, June 13 Fort C.F. Smith Park, Arlington, VA

One-third day. Nesting songbirds in woods, edge, and meadow habitat. Conditions may be muddy. **Meet time/place:** 7 am in parking lot. For more info, contact the leader, Karen Fairweather, at [twofairs@msn.com](mailto:twofairs@msn.com) or 703-841-1299 (10-person limit).

### Wednesday, June 24 Woodbridge/Occoquan Bay NWR, VA

Half day. Songbirds, waterfowl, eagles and other raptors. **Meet time/place:** 7:30 am inside the refuge at central parking lot. For more info, contact leader Jim Waggener at 703-567-3555 (6-person limit).

## SEPTEMBER

### Sunday, September 6 Sycamore Landing and Hughes Hollow, MD

Half day. Early migrant songbirds; some raptors, waterfowl, and migrating butterflies. **Meet time/place:** 8 am at the Sycamore Landing parking lot by the C&O Canal. Easy walking trail. For more information, contact the leader, Tony Futcher, at 301-422-3927 or [tonyfutcher1@verizon.net](mailto:tonyfutcher1@verizon.net).

Register online for Free Birding Trips at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults).

## Free Beginner Bird Walks Saturdays, 9-10 am at Woodend

These walks are on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults) for updates.

Join us Saturday mornings at Woodend for our Beginner Bird Walks. A volunteer leader will guide you through the important how-tos: from how to use binoculars to how to identify our most prevalent resident birds.

Meet at the Audubon Naturalist Shop parking lot. Bring binoculars or use ours. Register at [www.anshome.org/adults](http://www.anshome.org/adults).

These gentle walks happen every Saturday morning from March through June, and September through November. Walks take place only on the first Saturday of December through February. There are no walks in July and August.



# Natural History Field Studies



This popular program, cosponsored by the Audubon Naturalist Society and the Graduate School USA, provides a comprehensive and stimulating view of our region's natural history and conservation issues. Taught at the college freshman level, these courses are open to anyone 18 years of age or older, professionals and amateurs alike. A Certificate of Accomplishment is awarded for completion of a required curriculum of 39 Continuing Education Credits (CEUs). Classes are offered at several locations around the DC metro area, including the Audubon Naturalist Society's Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase, MD, and nature centers and other locations in Virginia, as well as the Capital Gallery in downtown DC, which is Metro accessible. For a complete list of the classes in the NHFS program, plus instructor bios, visit ANShome.org/adults.

## COVID-19 Update Natural History Field Studies

The summer term of Natural History Field Studies classes will not run due to the continuing "stay-at-home" and physical distancing orders from area governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the most important feature of these natural history and environmental courses is the linking of field experiences with classroom learning, we are pausing the program until we are able to safely offer field trips again. We hope that this will be possible by the fall quarter.

If by late summer, it appears that this will not be the case, we will consider the feasibility of another model of instruction in consultation with NHFS teachers and students. We hope to offer the following fall courses using the current format of classroom lectures, with in-classroom materials, combined with 2-3 field trips: Mammals; Introduction to Ecology; Bird Life; The Living Soil; and Wildlife Ecology.

The Audubon Naturalist Society will communicate any changes regarding this status as soon as we are able. Keep an eye on our website, our monthly E-news, and our Facebook page for updates. We will also contact former NHFS students directly when fall plans are determined.



*Learn about the Very Hungry Caterpillars of Summer with Dr. John Lill of George Washington University on July 28 at 7 pm!*



Photo by John Lill

## Naturalist Hour

**NEW!!**

Let's stay connected this summer in learning about the many wonders of nature!

Beginning in June, we will be hosting a series of Zoom talks from an amazing group of naturalists, including several local professors as well as familiar faces such as Mark Garland, Kerry Wixted, Joe Marx, Melanie Choukas-Bradley, and our very own Stephanie Mason.

We have been busy scheduling more than 20 Naturalist Hour talks for June and July! Topics include birds, fish, caterpillars, fungi, trees, geology, carnivorous plants, urban foraging, nature journaling, and more!

To see our exciting list of speakers and register, please visit [anshome.org/naturalist-hour](http://anshome.org/naturalist-hour).

Your donations are appreciated to help us offset the revenue losses we are experiencing this year due to the pandemic. (Minimum donation is \$10).



## Support ANS – Monthly!

It's easy! Go to [ANShome.org/Donate](http://ANShome.org/Donate), or contact Loree Trilling at 301-652-9188 x35 or [loree.trilling@anshome.org](mailto:loree.trilling@anshome.org).

If you haven't had a chance to catch up on local nature news, please take the opportunity to read some of the fantastic stories featuring ANS's own nature authorities. Below are a few excerpts, but we hope you'll go online to [anshome.org/newsroom](https://anshome.org/newsroom) and get caught up on how ANS staffers are helping make our region a more wonderful place for wildlife.

## Welcoming nature: By planting native species, homeowners can provide a habitat for wildlife, birds and bees—and help save the planet

by Amy Brecount White, Bethesda Magazine, May-June 2020 Edition

...To help the bird population rebound, experts say we need to grow more caterpillars. Raising just one clutch of six to eight chickadee chicks, for example, requires at least 6,000 caterpillars, according to the Audubon Naturalist Society, which is headquartered in Chevy Chase. "If you want to attract birds to your yard, you can do it in artificial ways, like putting [in] a bird feeder, or you can plant what they actually eat and what they feed to their young," says Renee Grebe, a conservation advocate for (ANS). "That's native seeds in the fall or oak trees that support over 500 species of caterpillars that they feed to their young"

...Espousing a sustainable aesthetic means viewing our yards and public green spaces as locations to nurture wildlife, rather than sources of eye candy, experts say. "We can be growing caterpillars and birds and butterflies and bees instead of growing grass," says Alison Pearce, the Woodend Sanctuary restoration leader at (ANS's) headquarters.

...Leave leaf litter under your bushes and borders in the fall "to support insect communities that are the base of the food chain for birds and other wildlife," says Pearce. Insects shelter, overwinter and reproduce there.

Go to [anshome.org/newsroom](https://anshome.org/newsroom) to read the complete story.

## A birdhouse provides an opportunity to see nature up-close and it's not always pretty

by Washington Post Columnist Courtland Milloy, May 5, 2020

A pair of wrens has moved into a birdhouse in my yard. The wrens have been single-minded in their quest for twigs and other nesting materials. By the end of the



month, there could be as many as 10 baby birds inside the house... All was going as planned until a few days ago, when some house sparrows and a woodpecker began pestering the wrens — perching on their house, blocking their entrance.

...Alison Pearce, director of restoration for the Audubon Naturalist Society, suggested I not fret too much about the intruders and take comfort in having provided more habitat for the wrens. "Whether we see it or not, wildlife is out there searching and competing for scarce resources," she said. "In our suburban and urban environments, there is less and less of what they need. So the more we can put back, the more life we can support."

Go to [anshome.org/newsroom](https://anshome.org/newsroom) to read the complete story.



Monarch caterpillar on common milkweed. Photo by Alison Pearce.



# 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](mailto:carol.hayes@anshome.org) for complete itineraries and registration information or visit [ANSHome.org/travel](http://ANSHome.org/travel).

## COVID-19 Update Nature Travel Program

During these challenging times ANS staff continues to work diligently to keep our community safe and healthy. With the uncertainty of air travel and social distancing in place we are taking a measured approach to our 2020/2021 scheduled trips and will re-evaluate their status as we move forward, relying on current scientific and government sources.

Please contact Carol at [carol.hayes@anshome.org](mailto:carol.hayes@anshome.org) or 301-652-9188 x10 if you are interested in registering for **South Texas** (November 5-13, 2020) with Mark England & Paul Pisano, or would like more information on **Panama** (January, 2021) with Terry Lawson Dunn or **Costa Rica** (February, 2021) with Stephanie Mason when itineraries and registration materials become available.



*Photo of altamira oriole by Mark S. Garland. This large, tropical species began ranging north into the US more than 50 years ago. Now it can be seen year-round in South Texas, the destination for our November 2020 Nature Travel Trip.*



*Brown-throated three-toed sloth. A trip to Panama is scheduled for January 2021.*



*White-faced capuchin monkey by Chris Mauro. A trip to Costa Rica is scheduled for February 2021.*



## Beauty, adventure, wonder, and new friends among the gifts of ANS's Costa Rica trip

by Gretchen Alexander

The Audubon Naturalist Society ecotourism trip to Costa Rica was enticing. The country had fascinated me since I wrote a report about it as a sixth grader. The diverse flora, fauna, colorfully painted wooden wagons, rainforests and mountains had held my interest for all the intervening years. I wanted to go on the trip but first I needed to ask permission from my daughter, Lisa Alexander, Executive Director of ANS.

"Lisa, would you mind if I signed up for the ANS Costa Rica trip? I wouldn't want to do anything that might embarrass you."

"Oh, Mom, go right ahead. ANS has handled bigger problems than you!"

Thus began a marvelous trip of learning, joy, friendship, and delight. Carolyn Peirce, another single traveler, sent me a get-acquainted note, and my daughters showered me with travel gifts.

I had tears running down my cheeks when I showed my passport at Costa Rican Customs; so excited was I to be there. Every step of the trip from arrival to departure was smoothly and graciously managed, beginning with the excellent preparatory materials and handholding by ANS Nature Travel Coordinator Carol Hayes. Senior Naturalist Stephanie Mason greeted us at dinner, introduced us to fellow guides Charlie and Niño, and explained the trip ahead.

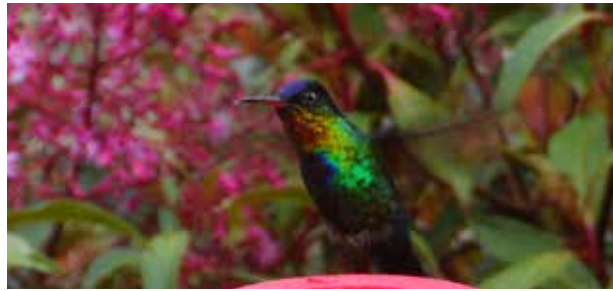
Each day offered a unique set of vistas and opportunities to observe the biodiversity of Costa Rica. An evening ritual was the "bird count" with all 12 participants circled around Charlie, Stephanie, and Niño to review the variety of birds we had seen and heard during the day. Days began with early morning bird walks and often concluded with night hikes and star-gazing. Each of us was given assistance in finding and seeing the special species.

It didn't take long for Stephanie and Charlie to notice I was often looking at plants while others were looking for birds. Soon I was learning botanical names and ecological niche stories. I had never seen such plant diversity and lushness, certain that if I stood still for 24 hours, something would grow on me. Leaves a yard across, strangler figs, tiny liverworts, lush moss carpets, enormous banyan trees, bromeliads of many hues, and orchids of all sorts delighted us.

Wintering birds familiar to us as summer birds, Central American natives of great color and size diversity, and very rare specimens were our daily delights. Hummingbirds by the dozens, rare water birds, monkeys, a porcupine sleeping in the hollow of a tree, iguanas, a tiny chirping mouse who shared my room one night, and coati-mundis eating bananas were just a few of the wonders we saw. The butterflies and moths were as unusual as the birds and flowers and fellow participant, Dr. James Burris (now a member of the ANS Board of Directors), shared his expertise in Lepidoptera.

The unexpected gift of the 2015 trip has been the lasting friendships developed during our travel together. Six of us have remained close friends; camping and hiking together, visiting each other's homes, and sharing life events. I recommend it to all who seek beauty, adventure, and wonder.

Pura Vida!



More than fifty species of hummingbirds dazzle visitors to Costa Rica.



Gretchen (top left) and fellow travelers Christine and Jim Burris wait out a heavy tropical rainstorm by looking at field guides.



A saucer-sized Owl butterfly feeds on fermenting papaya.



# Restoration

## A Tree Tour of historic and natural beauty

by Bradley Simpson, Restoration Fellow

Are you looking for new ways to explore Woodend? Have you always wanted to learn more about local trees? Well, now you can do both from the comfort of your own home with our new interactive virtual tree tour! Explore notable native species, the Maryland state tree, and Montgomery County Champion Trees all in one place. Each of the 21 species has a description of their origin, ecological importance and uses in history, along with photos. Discover the trees that make up Woodend's historic cultural landscape and natural areas. Learn



how Woodend's previous owner, Marion Wells, shaped the landscape with features such as the county champion Japanese maple and the cathedral grove of Eastern hemlocks. Explore the tulip trees, oaks and sycamores in the forest that feed and shelter wildlife.

Just go to <https://anshome.org/visit/> to find the tree tour online. Itching to see these trees for yourself? Feel free to get some exercise and check them out in person! Woodend is open to the public and each tree on the tour has an identifying label. Trees, like all Woodend visitors, are very good at social distancing.

If you would like to learn more about trees, check out our upcoming online tree identification classes on page 30. We will discuss winter and spring identification and learn how to use a key. These classes qualify as advanced training for Master Naturalists.



Photo by Bradley Simpson

Photo by Ben Israel

## Young conservationists give Woodend ecotone an upgrade

by Rob Pavlik, Chesapeake Conservation Corp Intern

Just as the world was turning upside down this spring, a pocket of habitat at Woodend got a real boost from the efforts of two members of the Chesapeake Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC is a program administered by the Chesapeake Bay Trust and provides young professionals with career experience in the environmental field at host sites around the region. Since August 2019, ANS Corps members Christian Meoli and Robert Pavlik have been hard at work in the ANS Restoration Department, helping to improve Woodend habitats. In late fall, they began work on their capstone projects to restore an “ecotone” at Woodend where meadow meets forest.

An ecotone is a transitional zone between two habitat types. These areas typically feature flora and fauna from both habitats and can be hotspots of biodiversity. However, in a fragmented landscape, meadow/forest ecotones are highly susceptible to invasive species. The availability of light allows opportunistic species to establish rapidly, while the presence of trees provides a ladder for invasive vines to climb. Birds often perch in the trees along the forest edge, depositing invasive seeds in just the right place to take advantage of these conditions. Restoring these key areas yields numerous benefits for the surrounding ecosystems.

Christian and Rob spent many hours working with our dedicated volunteers to remove invasive species such as multi-flora rose and porcelainberry along the edge of a lobe of forest that extends into meadow at Woodend. Then they planted the area with an assortment of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants. What was once dominated by two or three non-native species now has more than twenty native ones like musclewood, serviceberry, witch hazel, chokeberry, elderberry, sumac, arrowwood, white wood aster, and golden ragwort that will provide better food and shelter to wildlife.



Photo by Bradley Simpson

## Map your habitat and help build a wildlife corridor!

by Christian Meoli, Chesapeake Conservation Corp Intern

In our increasingly fragmented landscape, native plant gardens support wildlife by creating new habitat and connecting existing habitat in corridors that allow wildlife to move between larger natural areas like parks and nature preserves. ANS partnered with Backyard Bounty, a local landscaping company, to offer “Pollinator Planters” filled with blooming native plants to support pollinators and birds. These containers of habitat sold out quickly, but we’ll be sure to offer them again in the fall! In the meantime, we developed a tool to visualize the positive ecological impact of adding native plants to the landscape, whether in containers or gardens. Visit <https://anshome.org/pollinatorplanters/> to register the habitat you steward in your community. Our goal is to document how we are building wildlife corridors together. Be sure to have your habitat counted today!

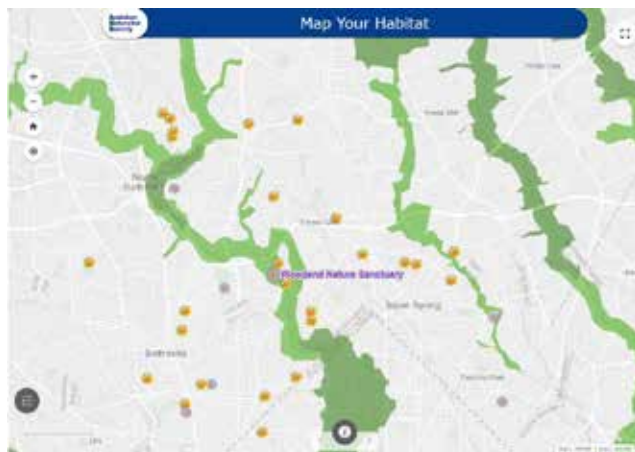


Photo by Allison Pearce



To every Counter, Sponsor & Donor participating in this year's Birdathon Like Never Before:

# THANK YOU!



Your support right now is more important than ever.

And there is still time to get involved! Learn how at

**[ANSHOME.ORG/BIRDATHON](http://ANSHOME.ORG/BIRDATHON)**



## Show the birds how much you appreciate their company!

The Audubon Naturalist Shop offers high-quality birdseed and feeders, birdbaths, and our own native seeds to help you grow a bird-friendly garden!



Please check online at [anshome.org/naturalist-shop/](http://anshome.org/naturalist-shop/) for current hours and delivery information.



**MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE CONTRIBUTIONS**

February-April 2020

**IN HONOR OF:****Melanie Choukas-Bradley**

Joan Zenzen

**Lauren Simpson**

Cora &amp; Murray Simpson

**Margie Steffens**

Mary Jane Wyant

**Larry Wisemanr**

Philip &amp; Lynn Metzger

**IN MEMORY OF:****Carl Bryson**

Brenda &amp; Tom Corbin

**Marcia Notley**

Varen Technologies

**Lola Oberman**Hon. Bill Bronrott; Vera & Ralph Deckelbaum;  
Amiel & Helen Francke; Frances Green; Cecily  
Nabors; Paul Pisano; Jeff Seitz; Catherine West;  
Frank Witebsky**José Rodríguez-Gil**

Derek &amp; Sonia Smith

**Emma Shelton**Elizabeth Falloon; Cecily Nabors; Laurance  
Redway**Miguel Veiga**

Mr. &amp; Mrs. Laurie MacArthur

**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 2015  
Combined Federal Campaign under EarthShare Mid-Atlantic.



**Plant a tree at Woodend  
Nature Sanctuary to help  
restore our living classrooms  
and to honor someone  
special in your life or  
celebrate a major life event.**

**Your gift will help restore Woodend's ecosystem so that  
it can further our education and conservation mission.**

**Plant your tree today!**

**Visit [www.anshome.org/plant-a-tree](http://www.anshome.org/plant-a-tree)**

Share your message about your business or organization with a prime audience!

# Naturalist Quarterly



reaches individuals and families who are passionate about our community and want to learn about businesses and organizations that support nature and our local environment.

Distributed in public spaces throughout the D.C. region and mailed directly to homes in ZIP codes that advertisers find most attractive, Naturalist Quarterly is an excellent way to promote your business.

To advertise, call Caroline Brewer at (301) 652-9188 ext. 23



## Innovative Landscapes for Outdoor Living

MARK WILLCHER & CO., INC.  
landscape designers/contractors

*Building sustainable gardens for birds, wildlife and people since 1980.*

[www.MarkWillcherCo.com](http://www.MarkWillcherCo.com)  
301-320-2040  
Mark@MarkWillcherCo.com

WASHINGTONIAN AWARD WINNER



Weddings  
Milestones  
Corporate Events

## Woodend Sanctuary & Mansion

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



Erin Kelleher Photography



**Scarlett**  
CELEBRATING OUR 151ST YEAR IN BUSINESS

- Providing the Highest Quality Pet Foods Since 1869
- Manufactured Locally in Souderton, PA
- Formulated Exclusively for Audubon Naturalist Society

Scarlett  
Sourced and Made in the USA  
www.scarlettpetfood.com

## WOODEND NATURE SANCTUARY

*Celebrate Life*

*"Thank you for your help while organizing my father's memorial. It went really well, and I couldn't have imagined a better spot to hold it."*

J. F., Washington, D.C.



**Celebrate the life of your loved one at historic Woodend Nature Sanctuary.**

When you need a place to remember and share fond memories of your loved one with family and friends, consider historic Woodend Sanctuary & Mansion.

Nestled on a 40-acre nature sanctuary, Woodend is conveniently located in Chevy Chase, MD, and offers a private setting with planning support, on-site parking, and excellent catering options, so you can focus on what matters most to you in moments like this.

## 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 may also register in person in the EE office Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 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.



*Get your garden ready!*

AUDUBON NATURALIST SHOP  
@ WOODEND SANCTUARY  
M-F 10 AM-5 PM  
SAT 9 AM-5 PM  
SUN 12 PM-5 PM



**NOW  
ACCEPTING  
APPLICATIONS**



**8940 Jones Mill Road  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815**

Non-profit org.  
AUTO  
U.S. postage  
PAID  
Suburban, MD  
Permit No. 3385

## Master Naturalist Training at Woodend Sanctuary!

This fall, ANS will partner with the University of Maryland Extension to offer our tenth Maryland Master Naturalist training course. ANS will bring top-notch instructors to the program, which will provide:

- 52 hours of training in the ecology, flora, and fauna of MD
- 8 hours of hands-on field work
- Focus on the natural history of Maryland's Piedmont region

Master Naturalist training graduates will commit 40 hours annually to naturalist-related volunteer service with ANS assisting with education programs, sanctuary stewardship, or community outreach.

**DATES:** Mondays & Wednesdays, September 9–November 2, 2020  
(9:30 am–3 pm)

Application-based admission limited to 20 participants.

If you'd like to learn more about the natural world and become a trained naturalist volunteer, apply online starting May 15 at [ANSHome.org/master-naturalist](http://ANSHome.org/master-naturalist). Questions? Email [mitch.greene@anshome.org](mailto:mitch.greene@anshome.org).

**Proudly printed on 30% post-consumer waste paper.  
Please recycle this paper.**



## Please help ANS support teachers and parents through the development of digital resources and programs



YES, I want to help ANS produce digital programs and resources for children and adults throughout the COVID-19 shut-down.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made out to Audubon Naturalist Society.

Please charge my VISA, MasterCard, AmEx, Discover Card.

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVC# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Audubon Naturalist Society, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815



Sample our digital content at  
[anshome.org/stay-connected](http://anshome.org/stay-connected)