



# Habitat Herald

A Publication of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

Spring 2015  
Volume XX, Issue 1

## Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy: 20 Years of Protecting, Preserving and Creating Healthy Wildlife Habitats

by Joe Coleman and Donna Quinn

Loudoun County's complex geologic history fashioned a rich and varied landscape that welcomed diversity and an abundance of wildlife. Its 521 square miles, including 6 square miles of water, and elevations ranging from 180 to 1,999 feet, encompass mountains, valleys, streams, forests, vernal pools, wetlands and meadows, which offer an array of opportunities for flora and fauna to thrive. Centrally located and within easy access to centers of commerce, information, travel, politics and power, it is no wonder more and more humans have also found Loudoun County an attractive place to reside and raise their young.

By 1994, our county population neared 100,000 and the soon to be completed Dulles Greenway promised high-speed access to still more people desiring to live in this beautiful and conveniently located county. Wildlife habitat was being destroyed at an alarming rate, and increasing numbers of our wild neighbors found themselves without a home. At this time, a small group of concerned residents gathered around a farmhouse kitchen table to talk about what could be done to protect wildlife habitat in Loudoun. These four individuals understood that while development was inevitable in such a desirable location, it could be done responsibly and with attention to also preserving wildlife habitat.

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy was founded in 1994 with the mission to "Promote the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats throughout Loudoun County by fostering an understanding of the value of nature and providing opportunities for applying that knowledge to the betterment of the natural environment." Twenty years later, this small group has grown to more than 1,000 members, as well as partners and hard-working executive, administrative, board and committee members – plus the many individuals who participate in supporting wildlife and our mission from outside the organization. Today, more attention than ever is being given to the necessity of preserving nature, as much for the emotional and physical health of humans,

■ Continued on page 2

"It's exciting seeing Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy continue to develop and grow. We often wonder how organizations become part of our community and here we are creating it. We're developing an organization that will endure and benefit future generations."

Nicole Hamilton, first Executive Director,  
November 2014.



### In This Issue:

Loudoun Wildlife 20 Years!	1		
The Habitat Herald	5		
Growing Up with Loudoun Wildlife	6		
Returning to Roots	7	Loudoun County Bird Atlas	10
Birdathon	7	Announcements	11
Volunteers and Members	8	Programs and Field Trips	12
		Nooks and Crannies	15
		Join Us in Celebrating 20 Years	16

Cover photo by Liam McGranaghan





### ■ LWC 20 Years, continued

"It could have been a high-density residential development or a shopping mall. It is surrounded by what it could have been. But, thanks to the vision and initiative of a handful of Loudoun citizens, Claude Moore Park today is an oasis of wildlife habitat in the rapidly urbanizing, eastern part of the county."

Tom Bjorkman, "Claude Moore Park", *Habitat Herald*, Summer 2003.



Photo by Donna Quinn

as for wildlife itself. While much wildlife habitat has been destroyed, it is also true that we have the power to solve problems, plan ahead, create and protect. We can and do make a difference!

### **Promoting the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats**

The organization's founders defined our mission to promote preservation of healthy habitats because the greatest threat to wildlife is the loss of habitat; they also felt it was not enough just to preserve habitat but we must also increase it. In our first program, Jocelyn Sladen, a founding member of the Virginia Native Plant Society, described to an audience of about 25 people the importance of native plants to wildlife. Fast forward to 2011, when Dr. Douglas Tallamy, the author of *Bringing Nature Home*, encouraged 250 attendees to replace non-native yard habitats with native plants to give birds, butterflies, bees and other wild neighbors a chance not just to survive, but to thrive.

We were inspired! Today, 76 properties totaling 1,580 acres have been certified as Audubon at Home sanctuaries in Loudoun, providing pollinators and other wildlife with pesticide-free, healthy habitats in our own backyards. Our Audubon at Home program and native plant sales assist the community by providing plants and educational materials on how to create wildlife refuges in our home gardens. We've also been planting milkweed and other native nectar plants, creating a mosaic of Monarch waystations, each patch contributing to increasing wildlife habitat throughout the county. At the end of last summer, there were 171 certified Monarch waystations in Loudoun, plus many more not yet certified.

Bluebirds are testimony to how increasing habitat can dramatically change the status of a species. After populations declined 90 percent, today we once again enjoy these symbols of happiness and gratefully accept their natural pest control service. Our bluebird nest box monitoring program includes 452

Managing Editor: Donna Quinn  
Programs Editor: Mary Ann Good  
Announcements Editor: Rachel Roseberry  
Photography Editor: Donna Quinn  
Contributing Editors: Lindsey Brookbank, Karen Coleman, Emily Cook, Mary Ann Good  
Proofreaders: Joe Coleman, Donna Quinn, Tracy Albert  
Production: Tracy Albert  
Design: Lorrie Bennett  
Printed by: Mr. Print, Purcellville, VA

Copyright © 2015 by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. All rights reserved. Articles and photographs are either the property of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, the author and/or the photographer. Permission is required for any republication. To reprint any or all of the Habitat Herald contact Donna Quinn at [dquinn@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:dquinn@loudounwildlife.org).

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) group of volunteers who share a common goal of protecting and perpetuating natural habitats for the benefit of both people and wildlife. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board meets the first Tuesday of each month. Board meetings are open to all current members. For more information, or to suggest topics for discussion at upcoming meetings, contact Nicole Hamilton. The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's office number is 703-777-2575.

#### **Executive Director**

#### **President**

#### **Vice President**

#### **Secretary**

#### **Treasurer**

#### **Amphibian Monitoring**

#### **Audubon at Home**

#### **Bird Surveys**

#### **Bluebird Monitoring**

#### **Butterfly Count**

#### **Conservation Advocacy**

#### **Development**

#### **Habitat Herald**

#### **Habitat Restoration**

#### **Membership**

#### **Monarch Campaign**

#### **Programs / Field Trips**

#### **Special Operations**

#### **Stream Monitoring**

#### **Volunteer Engagement**

#### **Youth Environmental Education**

#### **Bird Atlas Coordinator**

#### **Operations Assistant**

#### **Programs/Events Assistant**

Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org">nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Joe Coleman	540-554-2542	<a href="mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org">jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Katherine Daniels	214-733-7313	<a href="mailto:kdaniels@loudounwildlife.org">kdaniels@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Rhonda Chocha	571-246-7408	<a href="mailto:rchocha@loudounwildlife.org">rchocha@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Sharon Moffett	703-431-9704	<a href="mailto:smoffett@loudounwildlife.org">smoffett@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org">nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Ann Garvey	540-882-4405	<a href="mailto:agarvey@loudounwildlife.org">agarvey@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Joe Coleman	540-554-2542	<a href="mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org">jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Janet Locklear	571-512-8260	<a href="mailto:jlocklear@loudounwildlife.org">jlocklear@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org">nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Alysoun Mahoney	703-855-4033	<a href="mailto:amahoney@loudounwildlife.org">amahoney@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Patti Psaris		<a href="mailto:ppсарis@loudounwildlife.org">ppсарis@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Donna Quinn	703-217-3544	<a href="mailto:dquinn@loudounwildlife.org">dquinn@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Moni Burke	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:mburke@loudounwildlife.org">mburke@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Vacant		
Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org">nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Jim McWalters	703-727-5555	<a href="mailto:jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org">jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Phil Daley		<a href="mailto:pdaley@loudounwildlife.org">pdaley@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Vacant		
Hannah Duffy	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:hduffy@loudounwildlife.org">hduffy@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Sarah Steadman	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:ssteadman@loudounwildlife.org">ssteadman@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Spring Ligi	301-694-5628	<a href="mailto:sligi@loudounwildlife.org">sligi@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Martha Polkey	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:mpolkey@loudounwildlife.org">mpolkey@loudounwildlife.org</a>
Anne Zaleski	703-777-2575	<a href="mailto:azaleski@loudounwildlife.org">azaleski@loudounwildlife.org</a>



### ■ *LWC 20 Years, continued*

bluebird nesting boxes – with more boxes added each year. Last year, 1,130 Eastern Bluebirds, 917 Tree Swallows and 220 young of other species fledged from our nesting boxes! Because of the efforts to provide bluebird nesting habitat nationally as well as locally, we are thrilled to say Eastern Bluebirds are a conservation success story.

Many of our initial efforts as a conservancy involved advocating for clean water. In 1999 we were recognized by the Town of Leesburg for our riparian buffer restoration efforts. In 2000 we joined the Loudoun Clean Streams Coalition and held workshops describing steps the county's citizens could take to make sure its waterways are protected and kept clean. Over the past decade we have partnered with other organizations and have worked alongside hundreds of volunteers on restoration projects, such as the South Fork of the Catoctin, where we planted more than a thousand trees and shrubs. Today, this site and other riparian buffer restoration areas serve not only to protect waterways, but also to shelter wildlife and offer soothing landscapes for humans.

While Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy plays an important role in just about every nature preserve in the county, one of our greatest successes was the creation of the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve. In spite of numerous threats, including its possible sale to developers and construction of a golf course or ball fields, the 725-acre Banshee Reeks Preserve was saved largely through the efforts of Loudoun Wildlife. In the press and over the phone, we succeeded in rallying the county's citizens to ask the Board of Supervisors to keep Banshee Reeks natural. On April 21, 1999, the Board of Supervisors voted to make Banshee Reeks the county's first nature preserve. It is important to keep in mind our nature preserves exist because people went to great efforts to protect them.

Over the years, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy has been a voice for conservation by rallying our members to speak before the Board of Supervisors and other government decision-making bodies on a variety of issues affecting habitat and biodiversity. We have partnered with other organizations such as Dulles Greenway, the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, Friends of Banshee Reeks, and the Willowsford Conservancy, as well as local schools, churches and private industry who share our mission. For 20 years our leadership and vision have helped protect thousands of acres of wildlife habitat which have provided countless opportunities for people to enjoy the natural world.

### **Fostering an understanding of the value of nature**

From the beginning, education through outreach, programs and field trips have been critical to accomplishing Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's mission. Each year we provide a remarkable offering of walks, events and programs covering a wide range of topics and activities. Walks and field trips promise adventures for novices as well as experienced birders and nature lovers. The common theme throughout our events is the importance of wildlife, how dependent it is on healthy, native habitat, and what we can do to create and maintain wildlife habitat. All this plus how much fun and deeply satisfying it is for humans to connect with nature.



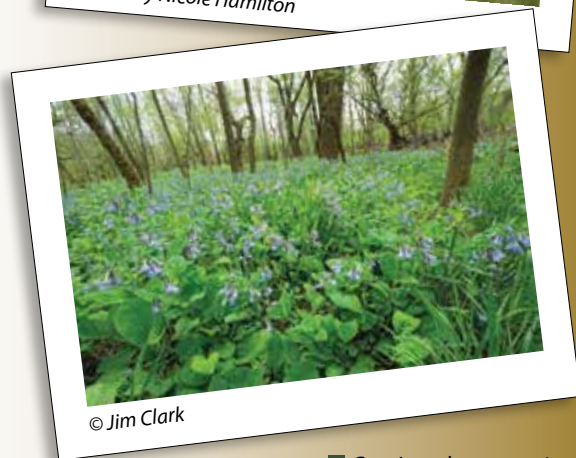
*Photo by Nicole Hamilton*

"**W**hat good is a stream? You might think the answer to that question is pretty obvious. After all, streams are an important source of drinking water in our region. They also provide recreation – fishing, canoeing, hiking, kayaking, or just watching the water go by. But consider also what good a stream is to a little bird that links our region to places far away."

Cliff Fairweather, "What Good is a Stream?", *Habitat Herald*, Summer 2001.



*Photo by Nicole Hamilton*



© Jim Clark

■ *Continued on page 4*



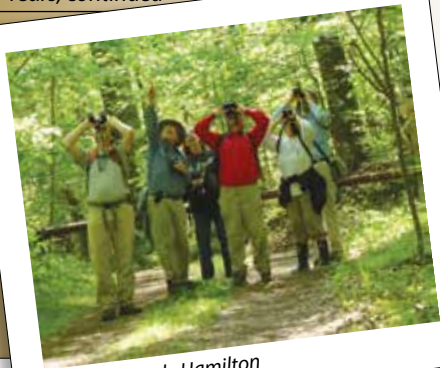
■ *LWC 20 Years, continued*

Photo by Nicole Hamilton



Photo by Nicole Hamilton



Photo by Sarah Steadman



Photo by Katherine Daniels

We've always recognized the importance of fostering a love of nature in our children. Even before 1999, when Less Sinn began our Young Naturalists Program, we focused on introducing the wonders of the natural world to children in a variety of activities, opportunities and programs. We've helped create outdoor nature classrooms and Monarch waystations at schools. Our Youth Environmental Education committee has offered nature book clubs and after-school nature clubs. We've generously supported scout projects and organized outdoor nature summer camps for children. At our annual meeting we recognize exceptional students with science fair project awards and the Roger Tory Peterson Nature Journal Awards. Perhaps the most rewarding experience of all, however, is when a child who participated in our programs returns to us as an adult dedicated to conservation work. Young people remind us how important it is to nurture a love and appreciation for nature; they represent our future.

### ***Providing opportunities for applying that knowledge to the betterment of the natural environment***

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy has been committed to not just doing something because it feels right, but because that action is based on sound science. Stream monitoring was our first major scientific monitoring project in partnership with three other organizations. The data gathered in stream monitoring translated into programs educating the public on the importance of maintaining clean water through healthy riparian buffers, the protection of flood plains and the implementation of best management practices for controlling soil erosion in development projects.

In 1997, Loudoun Wildlife held its first Annual Butterfly Count under the auspices of the North American Butterfly Association and Xerces, as well as its first Christmas Bird Count under the umbrella of the National Audubon Society. We have now documented 18 years of butterfly and bird counts in Loudoun. Over these 18 years we've seen many changes including Bald Eagles making their incredible post-DDT comeback, the almost complete disappearance of Northern Bobwhites and the rapid decline of once common Monarchs.

We are currently compiling the findings of our five year bird atlas project. This ground-breaking program tallied over 64,500 bird sightings by 85 volunteers. This important work tracks population trends of birds in our county and helps us identify areas where we can help protect birds, especially those with declining populations.

Whenever we feel it is necessary to take action, our first step is to collect data; everything we do is based on scientific fact. When county administration decided to spray for ticks, the conservation advocacy working group, led by chairperson Alysoun Mahoney, carefully researched and prepared a position paper (Rebalancing Loudoun County's Approach to Mitigating Lyme Disease, February 2014). This paper played an important role in the county's decision to survey tick populations and re-examine the safety of spraying pesticides. Ultimately, the county decided to discontinue spraying for ticks in parks for the time being. Our approach and this document demonstrate the power of advocating for conservation based on sound science, and the impact thorough research and fact gathering can have on policy.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy also provides fresh approaches to managing human-wildlife conflicts. We encourage the community to reach out to us when such conflicts occur. We provide educational materials to help understand the problem and offer long-term solutions, not quick and often destructive, temporary fixes.

### ***Looking to the future***

Some ask why care about nature and wildlife? If natural beauty and the astonishing diversity of life is not enough, and even if one would want to live in a place where children could not play in meadows and woods, where there were no clean waterways to refresh us in summer, or no Spring Peepers



## ■ LWC 20 Years, continued

announcing the end of winter, there are many other reasons to protect healthy natural habitats. An internet search for "benefits of nature" reveals strong evidence that direct contact with nature improves mental health, reduces stress, boosts self-confidence, and fosters a sense of well-being. Families who enjoy nature together know these interactions strengthen bonds and create lasting memories. If for no other reason, there is economic value to protecting wild places. Properties with more natural diversity are worth more. Pollination, sanitation, water purification, pest control, carbon dioxide sequestration – all critical life providing services – are given freely by nature. All nature asks of us is a chance to exist.

We've reached a critical point in conservation locally and globally. Our actions today determine the future of many species, not just here in Loudoun County, but also in distant places we are connected to by epic migrations, air and water, seeds, wings, feet and fins. We thank all of you who have supported our mission through hands-on volunteering, financial donations and partnerships – we wouldn't be where we are today without you. As we look to the future, we hope you will join us in protecting wildlife habitats and connecting people with nature – the future is in our hands.



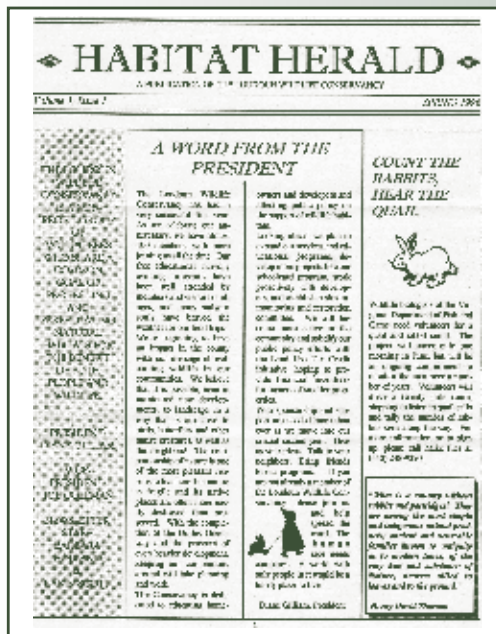
Photo by Kevin Munroe

"The bottom line is every one of us can make a difference. By banding together in groups like the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, we can encourage our government and our citizens to preserve and appropriately manage our rapidly disappearing natural areas. And through our individual efforts, we can plant and grow gardens that nourish and help preserve our increasingly-threatened wildlife as well as protect the health of our families."

Joe Coleman, "A Word from the President", *Habitat Herald*, Spring 2009

## The Habitat Herald

There is little doubt one of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's most important educational tools throughout the years has been the *Habitat Herald*. Contributors have included nationally renowned photographers, scientists and authors – as well as many of us with no special credentials, simply a passion for the natural world and the desire to share it.

The first *Habitat Herald*

Since our first issue in the spring of 1996, the *Habitat Herald* has endeavored to capture the spirit and efforts of the dedicated volunteers who have made Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy such a dynamic and important organization. As the organization has grown, the Herald, too, has grown and evolved. We currently distribute approximately 1,900 copies each quarter and recently began printing our cover in color (don't miss the on-line full color version at [www.loudounwildlife.org/HH\\_Archives.htm](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/HH_Archives.htm)).

The *Habitat Herald* strives to inform, enthrall and inspire. Many of our members are a part of the stories we share and we wouldn't have a story without you! In words and photographs, we invite you to share the magic we find in the natural world – and for you to share your experiences with us.

On behalf of the enthusiastic, devoted and very talented writers, photographers, editors, contributors and layout designer who make the *Habitat Herald* possible, I thank all of you for supporting Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, for reading the *Habitat Herald*, and most of all, for caring about wildlife.



Donna Quinn, Managing Editor  
Photo by Nicole Hamilton





# Growing Up with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

by Emily Bzdyk

**I**t was 1995 and I was 9 years old when my grandmother brought me to my first Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy meeting. Loudoun Wildlife was still a very young organization, just getting started. With my unwavering fascination for insects and nature, she thought I'd enjoy stream monitoring. Together we attended workshops where we learned to collect and identify the aquatic invertebrates. We joined a team and begin quarterly monitoring at a site called "North Fork Goose Creek". Over the years I helped my grandmother get down the steep stream bank to the monitoring site. When she became unable to make the climb, my father stepped in to help in her place. When I was 15, I was made the captain of the monitoring team. This position taught me about leadership, in which I learned to delegate tasks and work with others. As an adolescent working with other adults and mentors, this was a unique and valuable experience that would stay with me throughout my life.

I went to St. Mary's College of Maryland to study biology, art, and environmental studies. During a summer hiatus from classes, I returned to serve as an intern for Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. I helped develop a new stream monitoring program notebook, wrote articles for the *Habitat Herald*, and helped organize events such as a fundraiser concert. I learned a lot about teaching when I gave a presentation about stream monitoring and led a high school class in an insect identification lab. I also helped children explore nature by assisting with the nature camp.

Graduate school took me to Davis, California, but I maintained my ties to Loudoun Wildlife. In my spare time, I continued to write for the *Habitat Herald*, especially enjoying the chance to write about insects. I received my Master's Degree in Entomology, and even discovered and described a new species of bee!

After graduation, I returned to Virginia and obtained my Master Naturalist certification. I continued to help when I could by collecting and rearing Monarch caterpillars and volunteering at events. Today, I'm a mother and have again moved away, but I am still happy to regularly write articles for this publication. I always learn something by writing for the *Habitat Herald* and enjoy sharing this knowledge with others.

I have been with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy since almost the beginning. Early in my life, it helped guide my interests in nature and insects toward studying biology. I also developed a strong commitment to conservation as I learned how the actions of society directly affect the health of the environment and living organisms. I gained a desire to educate others about science and nature. I've watched Loudoun Wildlife grow from a small group of concerned citizens to the large and valuable organization it is today. I'm very proud to be part of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and grateful for its role in shaping my life. I look forward to the future and continuing to serve and learn with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy.



*Emily shares her passion for wildlife with children  
Natural History Day Camp at Banshee Reeks*



# Returning to Roots

by Alex Darr

Arboriculture & Agroforestry Design: Education, Consulting, and Implementation

I was 6 months old when my family moved to Loudoun County in 1990, and ever since, it has been the place I think of as home. My early years were spent picking berries and playing in the creeks and streams around my neighborhood; during my teen years I went backpacking and kayaking on county trails and rivers. In high school, I was fortunate to take classes with Liam McGranaghan and John DeMary, which included numerous field trips to the Blue Ridge Center and listening to guest lecturers from the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. In these classes, we restored wetlands, tracked songbird and amphibian populations, and learned to identify native plants, animals and aquatic insects. We studied birds of prey, sought out hollow trees full of flying squirrels, and much more.

As a first-hand witness to development pressure coming from the eastern portion of the county, I saw Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy as a critical force for the preservation of the waterways and forests I enjoyed so much. Though I spent a few years of my adolescence anguished and enraged by the environmental degradation caused by industry and agriculture, I eventually saw that education and preservation provided a better way forward, thanks to Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and other similar organizations.

The things I learned during my formative years while trekking through the backwoods of Loudoun helped shape my educational and career paths. Through these experiences, it became clear to me I must dedicate my life to preserving habitat and natural areas through proper management and teaching human inhabitants to respect and cherish them. This is why, following graduation from Virginia Tech with a degree in Urban Forestry, as well as a few years of travel around the country to learn and work, I have returned to my roots. I see tremendous potential for perennial agriculture and forestry to improve water and habitat quality here. I count myself incredibly fortunate to have grown up in Loudoun and I'm eager to give back to the place and the people that have played a strong role in leading me to dedicate my life and career to regenerating and preserving ecosystems in Loudoun County.



## Birdathon 2015! May 1-10

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) celebrates and brings attention to bird migration, one of the most important and spectacular events in the Americas. Each spring millions of birds make epic journeys from winter grounds north. Join us in raising awareness of the wonders of bird migration and the importance of protecting bird habitat.

Form a team and compete to find the most bird species in Loudoun County. All skill levels welcome. Great prizes for different age groups and skill levels.



Field Sparrow © Jim Clark

### Ways to Participate

#### 1) Be a Birdathoner

- Register to be a birdathon participant by forming a team and signing up on the website.
- Gather pledges from friends, family, neighbors in support of helping birds. Select your count day (a 24-hour period between May 1-10).
- Follow up with your sponsors to collect their pledges and mail them in to Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy by June 15.

#### 2) Be a Sponsor

- Make a pledge and sponsor a team.

#### 3) Join us for a walk!

- Visit our website to sign up for an International Migratory Bird Day bird walk.

For more information visit:

[www.loudounwildlife.org/IMBD.htm](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/IMBD.htm)





# Volunteers and members

## We wouldn't be here today without you!



Our first Executive Director, Nicole Hamilton  
Photo by Donna Quinn

*"Absolute minimums, not averages, govern what survives. An ecosystem does not crash all at once but habitat by habitat and species by species. There is no single threshold. Every species has its own. Every reduction of habitat will cross the threshold of several to many species."*

Stan Shetler, "Land Use Impact on Habitat and Bio-Diversity",  
Habitat Herald, Fall 2000.



Amphibian monitoring Photo by Nicole Hamilton



Planting Monarch waystations on the W&OD trail  
Photo by Nicole Hamilton

*"We should strive instead for a balanced view of wildlife – recognizing our responsibility to safeguard wild habitat and to act humanely toward these wild animals, while understanding the animals' basic right to exist free of human depredation and interference."*

Leslie McCasker, "Living with Backyard Wildlife",  
Habitat Herald, Winter 2004.





Telling the story Photo by Laura McGranaghan

*"We believe that it is possible, even in manicured new developments, to landscape in a way that is attractive to birds, butterflies and other native creatures, as well as the neighbors!"*

Diane Gillian, first president of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, first issue of the *Habitat Herald*, Spring 1996



Fostering a love of nature Photo by Nicole Hamilton

*"Our actions, or lack of actions, have the power to change, or not change, policies which impact the health and safety of our surroundings."*

Donna Quinn, "Chirps – 50 Years After Silent Spring", *Habitat Herald*, Fall 2012.

*"If there is just one thing you could do to help nature, your best choice would be that of planting a White Oak and letting nature smile upon your action."*

Liam McGranaghan, "The White Oak", *Habitat Herald*, Spring 2012



Counting birds Photo by Donna Quinn



Advocating for Monarchs Photo by Nicole Hamilton



*American Kestrel in nesting box*  
© Jim Clark



*Bald Eagle on nest*  
Photo by Liam McGranaghan

## Loudoun County Bird Atlas Preliminary Results Are In!

by Spring Ligi

For the past five years, local citizen scientists have been observing and listening to birds in their backyards and throughout Loudoun County, acquiring a unique and intimate glimpse of our feathered friends. Did that cardinal have nesting material in her mouth? Is that the deep, soft hoots of a dueting pair of Great Horned Owls? These and other behaviors were documented on field cards and entered into an online database hosted by the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. The results of this year-round Bird Atlas, funded by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, provide a comprehensive list of breeding and non-breeding birds in Loudoun and information on their distribution.

The Bird Atlas was quite an undertaking, with 85 enthusiastic atlasers volunteering almost 6,000 hours in the field and reporting more than 64,500 sightings. 263 species were documented between April 2009 and March 2014, with 104 of these species confirmed as breeding in Loudoun County.

Where did we find the most species? Surprisingly, the top five blocks with the most species were in eastern Loudoun, which, unlike the somewhat rural western half of the county, is undergoing rapid development. An astounding 190 species were documented in the Brambleton area and also in southeastern Leesburg (areas in and around Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve). The Sterling area, including Algonkian and Bles Parks, proved to be another rich birding area, hosting over 165 species. One possible explanation for why these more urbanized areas are so productive is that the birds are forced into smaller pockets of suitable habitat, making them easier to observe and document.

How have the birds changed in Loudoun over the past 25 years? Two species whose stories stand out are the Bald Eagle and Northern Bobwhite. Bald Eagles were confirmed as breeding in seven atlas blocks and observed in 52 of the 73 blocks. These results provide a striking contrast to the 1980s Virginia BBA, which did not report any breeding Bald Eagles in Loudoun County. Their successful comeback can be directly attributed to the banning of DDT and placement of this species on the endangered species list. Conversely, the Northern Bobwhite is a species that has declined severely throughout the county over the past 25 years. Evidence of at least possible breeding was reported in only 19 of the 73 atlas blocks, which is down significantly from 61 blocks in the 1980s Virginia BBA. Their decline can be attributed to habitat loss and degradation resulting from development in our rapidly growing county, as well as changes in agricultural practices throughout their range.

Additional products from the Bird Atlas will include a new and improved *Birds of Loudoun Checklist*, a summary article, species accounts, comparisons with the 1985-1989 Virginia BBA, and identification of important bird areas throughout the county. Identifying important bird areas will allow Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and other local conservation groups to design strategies to protect the birds and other wildlife within these areas.

We've only just begun analyzing this fascinating Bird Atlas dataset. Check the website ([www.loudounwildlife.org/Bird\\_Atlas.htm](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/Bird_Atlas.htm)) for more information and stay tuned in the coming months for distribution maps, species accounts, case studies, and additional atlas comparisons!





## Announcements

### Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy 20th Anniversary Annual Meeting and Family Fun!

**Sunday, May 31, 2-4:30 pm, location TBA - Inviting all members!**

**T**his year our annual meeting is extra special because we are celebrating our 20th anniversary! Help us recognize two decades of connecting people with nature, advocating for wildlife, restoring, preserving and creating wildlife habitat, and providing free educational programs to the community.

- Participate in hands-on family activities.
- Meet wildlife ambassadors from the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center.
- Enjoy a program about wildlife rescue given by our friends from the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center.
- Learn about our goals, accomplishments and hopes for the future.

The meeting also includes light refreshments; recognition of our science fair winners and the Roger Tory Peterson Young Naturalists, announcement of our Volunteer of the Year, and a brief business meeting. There will also be merchandise and native plants for sale.

This is a member-only event, so join or renew today if you haven't already done so! Registration required: [www.loudounwildlife.org/SignUp.htm](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/SignUp.htm).



*Seymore, the Barred Owl, a wildlife ambassador from Blue Ridge Wildlife Center [www.blueridgewildlife.org/education.html](http://www.blueridgewildlife.org/education.html)*

### Making a difference! 10th Annual Drive for Charity – May 21, 2015

**T**he Dulles Greenway and its parent company, Toll Road Investors Partnership II, L.P., have a long-standing commitment helping Loudoun County. In the past nine years, they have contributed over \$2 million dollars to selected local charities by donating all the tolls collected in a day. Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is honored to be one of the recipients again this year. Let's make this the best year ever! Show your support for healthy wildlife habitats in Loudoun County Drive the Dulles Greenway on May 21!

Our thanks go to the Dulles Greenway for their generous support and to all of you who choose to drive the Greenway on this special day. Take the Dulles Greenway on Thursday, May 21, for a faster commute and to help local charities make an even bigger difference in Loudoun.

### Audubon At Home

**L**oudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Audubon at Home Program: Just ask and we will arrange for a visit by an ambassador from Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Audubon at Home (AAH) program to discuss sustainable changes you can make to improve your wildlife habitat. Ambassadors will offer guidance on decreasing pesticide use, identifying invasive plants, improving water usage and suggesting beneficial plants suitable for your yard. To schedule a visit with an AAH Ambassador, contact [Agarvey@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:Agarvey@loudounwildlife.org).



*Shooting Star (Dodecatheon meadia)*

*Photo by Liam McGranaghan*

### Native Plant Sale

Saturday April 18 from 9 am to 3pm at Morven Park.

Three vendors will have a wide variety of native plants to offer:

Janet Davis of Hill House Farm and Nursery, Julie Borneman of Watermark Woods Nursery and Randee Wilson of Nature by Design will have a large selection of locally grown native plants.

**Got questions?** A Help Desk specialist provides answers to your native gardening questions. Volunteers can provide information about native plants and the wildlife they attract.

#### **And more!**

Tuscarora Landscaping Choice (TLC): all-in-one organic soil amendment, fertilizer and deer repellent

Blade sharpening by Ronnie of Sharp Blades

Garden sculptures by Ramsey Hamilton

Rain barrels for sale by Loudoun Soil and Water District

Bluebird houses, predator guards and poles for mounting

Check our website for complete list of activities and vendors. [www.loudounwildlife.org/Calendar\\_April.htm](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/Calendar_April.htm)



# Programs and Field Trips



Space is limited for many of these programs and field trips. Please call the designated program contact for further information and to reserve your spot. For up-to-date information on our programs and to sign up, visit our web site at [www.loudounwildlife.org](http://www.loudounwildlife.org).

**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board Meeting** — The Board typically meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. All Loudoun Wildlife members are welcome. **Contact Nicole Hamilton at [nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Morven Park Nature Walk — Sunday, April 5, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a free family nature walk as we explore some of the diverse habitats at Morven Park and encounter the interesting wildlife that use them. This time of year, certain frogs and salamanders are just starting to stir and winter bird species are still present. If you own binoculars, please bring them. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Monarch Butterflies: The Great Migration Underway — Thursday, April 9, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m., North Gate Vineyards.** Monarch Butterflies make an epic migration each year – a journey that passes right through Loudoun County. With the Monarch population reaching unprecedented lows, this migration is in peril. Monarchs leave the mountains of Mexico in March and head north in a relay of life, sending future generations onward to repopulate the United States and Canada. While they journey north, join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to hear tales from the Monarch sanctuaries, updates on the status of the Monarch population and predictions on when they'll reach Virginia. Learn how to plant a Monarch waystation and help Keep the Magic Alive! Handouts will be available as will staff from North Gate if you would like to purchase a glass of wine to enjoy during the talk. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Spring Wildflowers — Saturday, April 11, 10 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Balls Bluff.** Join John DeMary, well-known local naturalist and retired teacher, on a Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy field trip to explore this beautiful, wooded riverside park for the early spring wildflowers that enrich the Potomac River Valley. We will also watch for early migrating birds. If you own binoculars, please bring them. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

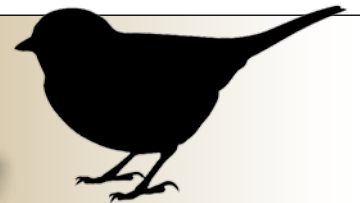
**Native Bees — Sunday, April 12, 2:00 p.m., Morven Park.** Spring is coming, and when warm weather returns, so will the bees! Most of us know honeybees are important pollinators of our food. Apples, almonds, peaches are just a few of the foods we rely on honeybees to pollinate. But before humans brought honeybees from Europe, there were already bees here in Loudoun, pollinating the native plant life. Native bees play an incredibly important role in our ecosystem. Why do we need native bees? Where are they? What do they do? How can we encourage them? In this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy program presented by Emily Bzdyk, we will learn more about local native bee biology and diversity. We will cover what bees need to thrive and how we can support them. Weather permitting, we will venture out into the grounds of Morven Park to collect and observe any bees

we can find. Dress for the weather with comfortable walking shoes. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Native Plant Sale — Saturday, April 18, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Morven Park.** Native plants are beautiful and grow better because they are adapted for our weather conditions and soils; they also provide greater benefit to our native wildlife because plants and animals evolved together. Three vendors will have a wide variety of native plants to offer: Janet Davis of Hill House Farm and Nursery in Castleton, Virginia ([www.hillhousenativeplants.com](http://www.hillhousenativeplants.com)); Julie Borneman of Watermark Woods Nursery in Hamilton, Virginia ([www.watermarkwoods.com](http://www.watermarkwoods.com)); and Randee Wilson of Nature by Design in Alexandria, Virginia ([www.nature-by-design.com](http://www.nature-by-design.com)). The sale, sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, is staffed by volunteers that have knowledge of native plants. To see plants each nursery carries or to place orders ahead of time (all nursery stock is not present), visit their websites. **Questions: Contact Ann Garvey at [agarvey@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:agarvey@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival — Saturday, April 18, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and Sunday, April 19, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** The annual Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival is a great way to kick off your spring activities! Visit Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at our booth for hands-on activities for kids of all ages, see what bear scat really looks like, quiz yourself on different wildlife tracks and signs and pick up lots of free handouts with ideas for the whole family to get outside and explore nature. We will also have a special section of the booth set up with all our Monarch Butterfly materials and campaign swag. For more information on the event, visit the festival website at [www.idalee.org/parks/events/FlowerGarden](http://www.idalee.org/parks/events/FlowerGarden).

## Birding Banshee



Join the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Friends of Banshee Reeks for the monthly bird walk at the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve south of Leesburg. Because of its rich and varied habitat, it is a birding hot spot. Bring binoculars if you have them. **Questions: Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Second Saturdays: April 11, May 9, June 13 and July 11, at 8:00 a.m.**





## Birding the Blue Ridge Center

**J**oin us on the monthly bird walk at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, a beautiful 900-acre preserve in northwestern Loudoun County. The property includes diverse wildlife habitats, including meadows, streams and heavily forested slopes. Meet at the Education Center; bring binoculars if you have them. BRCS is located just north of Neersville at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte 671); detailed directions at [www.brce.org](http://www.brce.org).

**Questions: Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org)**

**Fourth Saturdays: April 25, May 23 and June 27, at 8:00 a.m.**

**The Wood Turtle in Virginia: Conservation of a Slow-Moving Species in a Rapidly Changing Landscape — Thursday, April 23, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Morven Park.** With nearly 50% of the world's 300 or so turtle and tortoise species threatened with extinction, turtles are among the most endangered of vertebrate animals. Yet, they are also an ancient and highly distinctive group – no other group of animals wears its ribs outside of its body as a shell. In Virginia and across its range, these features and threats make the Wood Turtle a cause for wonder and concern. It is one of the most interesting species in North America and also among the most threatened. Like turtles in general, the Wood Turtle does most things slow and steady, and this no longer wins the race in our rapidly changing, modern world. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and Tom Akre of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute as he presents the current story of turtle conservation with a focus on his Wood Turtle research in Virginia. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Birding in Algonkian Nature Preserve — Saturday, April 25, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.** Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is happy to join Algonkian Regional Park's new series of interpretive nature walks introducing people to the delights of the "Algonkian Nature Preserve." Bill Brown will be leading a bird walk especially suited to new birders and folks who have never explored this riverside park. Anyone interested in birds is welcome, including families with children over 10. Spring migration will be in full swing, so this should be a good opportunity to see and learn about a wide variety of colorful birds, including migrants, local breeders and year-round residents. Bring binoculars if you have them. Meet at the boat ramp. Registration required: Registration will be done through Algonkian Park rather than Loudoun Wildlife; visit our website for details. **Questions: Contact Bill Brown at [billbr50@msn.com](mailto:billbr50@msn.com) or 703-437-6277.**

**Earthday@Loudoun — Sunday, April 26, 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Willow Creek Farm, 42920 Broadlands Blvd, Broadlands.** This free festival will offer virtually everything for the eco-conscious: a marketplace offering earth-friendly products and services, hands-on educational activities for all ages and many other entertainment options. The festival is designed to be a family-oriented event to inform Loudouners on the environmental changes happening in the local area. Every year new performances bring diversity and fun to the event. For more information visit [www.earthdayatloudoun.org](http://www.earthdayatloudoun.org). Stop by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy tent for free materials and information. We'll have Monarch campaign t-shirts, stickers, tip sheets and more!

**Celebrate Birds, Go Birding! International Migratory Bird Day — Friday, May 1 – Sunday, May 10.** During the spring, thousands of migratory birds move through North America to their nesting territories. Some will stay and nest in our area, while others will spend only a few days here replenishing their energy before continuing a journey that may be thousands of miles long. To celebrate and highlight this natural phenomenon and the importance of natural habitats, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy has scheduled several IMBD walks between May 1 and May 10, including the Blue Ridge Center on May 1, Morven Park on May 3, Bles Park on May 4, Beagle Club May 6, western Loudoun on May 8, Banshee Reeks on May 9 and more. Visit our website to see a listing of all the walks and to participate. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Monarch Butterflies: Keeping the Magic Alive with You! — Thursday, May 7, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m., Morven Park.** You've probably heard the news. One of our most recognized species, the Monarch Butterfly, is in peril. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy as we will tell the story of the Monarch, the journey it takes, the countries it crosses, the people it touches and the habitat it needs. Learn about what caused the population decline and most importantly, become a part of this growing movement to lift the spade, dig in the dirt, and plant milkweed. Monarchs have already left their overwintering sites in Mexico. They are making the great migration back. Let's join hands to receive them together! Handouts and information will be available. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org).**

**Huge Milkweed Plant Sale!!! Saturday, May 16, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Morven Park (Big Parking Lot).** Inch by inch, row by row, let's get our milkweed and Monarchs to grow! These are all native — seeds from right here in Loudoun and surrounding parts of Virginia! People like you and me sent them to Monarch Watch in Kansas last fall, and there, the plants were grown naked (NO pesticides!). Now they're coming back home, ready for your garden or landscaping project. At this sale sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, we'll have approximately 1,000 milkweed plants available for purchase – \$3 per plug. They are mostly Common and Swamp Milkweed, but there may be a small number of Tuberose (Butterflyweed) available too. We'll also have the Monarch rearing cages, books, t-shirts and information on planting and certifying your garden or landscape as a waystation. **Questions: Contact Nicole Hamilton at [nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org).**

■ Continued on page 14



### ■ Programs and Field Trips, continued

**Virginia Oaks — Saturday, May 16, 2:00 p.m., Morven Park.** The oak trees of Virginia number 28 species. Learn how to tell them apart by location, bark, branching, leaves, buds and acorns. At this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy workshop, Carrie Blair of the Virginia Native Plant Society, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, will teach the fine points that differentiate the many local oak species at Morven Park. We will spend one hour in class and one hour in the field. Bring field guides, binoculars, oculars, cameras and notebooks. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

### **Dulles Greenway Drive for Charity — Thursday, May 21, All Day!**

On Thursday, May 21, paying the toll on the Dulles Greenway has a special meaning for local charities. This, the 10th annual Drive for Charity, is a one-day event that raises thousands of dollars that go directly into the local community. Each year the money raised has increased, and last year's event raised \$294,500, divided among five local charities: The March of Dimes, Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter, Every Citizen Has Opportunity (ECHO), Fresh Air/Full Care and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. This one-day event makes a huge difference for Loudoun Wildlife, enabling us to provide our many programs and projects throughout the year. Our thanks to the Dulles Greenway for this great event and to all of you who choose to drive the Greenway on this special day.

**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's 20th Annual Meeting — Sunday, May 31, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m., Morven Park.** Each year Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for members to gather, celebrate another year of accomplishments and hear an interesting guest speaker. On this special 20th anniversary, the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center will do a program on Wild Virginia, an up-close and personal visit with our wild neighbors and their natural history. The program focuses on animals that live in Virginia and interesting facts and stories about their lives. If you're not yet a member or need to renew, please do! We really need you as a current member. The annual meeting also includes light refreshments; award presentations to science fair winners, Roger Tory Peterson Young Naturalists and the volunteer of the year; and a short business meeting. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Birding in Algonkian Nature Preserve — Saturday, June 6, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.** Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is happy to join Algonkian Regional Park's new series of interpretive nature walks introducing people to the delights of the "Algonkian Nature Preserve." Bill Brown will be leading a bird walk especially suited to new birders and folks who have never explored this riverside park. Anyone interested in birds is welcome, including families with children over 10. At this time of year birds should be quite active with nesting, courtship and raising young, so there should be plenty to see. Bring binoculars

if you have them. Meet at the boat ramp. Registration required: registration will be done through Algonkian Park rather than Loudoun Wildlife; visit our website for details. **Questions: Contact Bill Brown at billbr50@msn.com or 703-437-6277.**

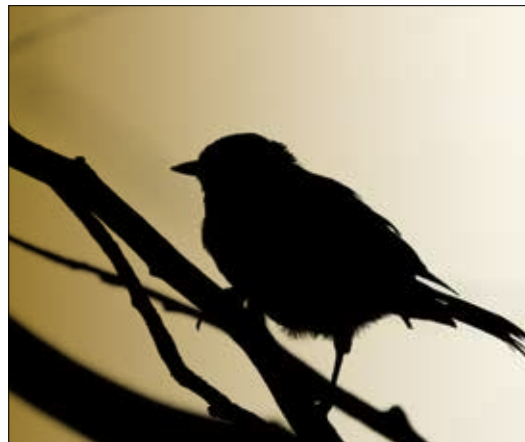
**Dragonflies and Damselflies of Loudoun Field Trip — Saturday, June 27, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and Kevin Munroe for a fun and informative day of "dragon-hunting" in some of the best dragonfly and damselfly sites in the county. Learn how to catch, handle, identify and release these insects. Bring an insect net if you have one (some extra nets will be provided), a hat, sunscreen, lunch, water and binoculars. We may be walking off-trail through tall vegetation so wear appropriate protection and be prepared for muddy conditions. Adults and interested children are welcome; come for part or all day. We will travel between 3 or 4 sites (hopefully including the new park at White's Ford) and eat in one of the parks, so please bring your own lunch and snacks. Meet at Ida Lee Park in Leesburg. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Learn How to Raise & Release Monarch Butterflies — Sunday, June 28, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., Morven Park.** Raising and releasing butterflies can be a great way to not only learn about the life cycle of Monarchs but also see the direct relationship between plants and animals. It all starts with having milkweed plants because that is the only plant Monarchs lay their eggs on and the only food they eat as caterpillars, so be sure to plant that in your garden this spring. At this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy workshop, we'll share tips for finding eggs and caterpillars and for raising and releasing Monarchs through the summer and fall.

Rearing cages will be available for purchase. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Morven Park Nature Walk — Sunday, July 5, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a free family nature walk through the forest as we visit wooded wetlands, look for wildflowers and discuss the flora and fauna that make up this forest. If you own binoculars, please bring them. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

**Butterflies of Loudoun Identification Class — Sunday, July 12, Location and Time TBD.** Learn tips and tricks for identifying 55 of our 85 local butterflies. Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Nicole Hamilton will lead the class in an indoor session. After the class, those who are interested can go outside to try the ID tips on butterflies spotted in nearby gardens and wild weedy areas. This is a great way to hone your skills and get ready for our 19th Annual Butterfly Count in August! Cost: \$5 members, \$10 non-members. **Registration required: Sign Up Online. Questions: Contact info@loudounwildlife.org.**

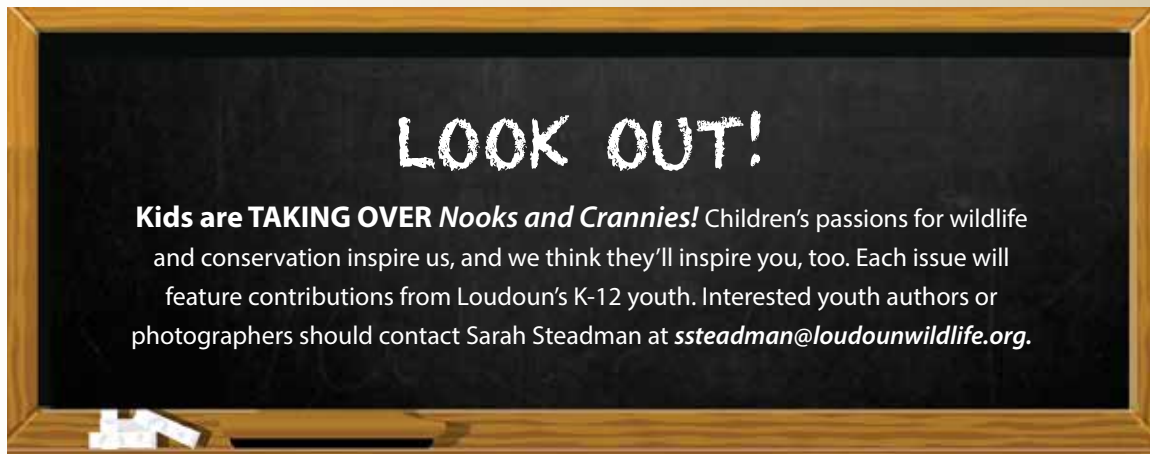


For up-to-date information on our programs and to sign up, visit our web site at [www.loudounwildlife.org](http://www.loudounwildlife.org).





# Nooks and Crannies - A Place for Families



## Magic Is In Our Hands

by Carter Steadman

**M**y name is Carter Steadman, and I am a young naturalist. I am trying to help save the Monarch butterfly. I plant milkweed and waystations, I raise and release wild Monarchs and I talk to kids and families at public events with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy because I want to encourage more young citizens to be involved. I believe you are never too young to make a difference and that the Monarch butterfly really is magical because everyone agrees it's beautiful and worth saving.

To help Monarch butterflies, plant a waystation with your family this year!

You can buy native milkweeds and different native nectar plants at Loudoun Wildlife's Native Plant Sale on April 18th. See how fun and easy it is to create your Monarch waystation from our helpful online resources at [www.loudounwildlife.org/Monarch\\_Campaign\\_Plant\\_Waystations.html](http://www.loudounwildlife.org/Monarch_Campaign_Plant_Waystations.html).

If you plant milkweed, the Monarchs will come and so will many other cool bug buddies to study. When you see Monarchs, report back to us at our Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Facebook page and we'll share your sightings. See you at the plant sale!



Photo by Sarah Steadman

## Magic Is In Our Hands

Poem by Carter Steadman, age 10

The world would be a better place if  
people had special eyes to  
see every sad loss  
of Mother Nature's species  
in this world.

It does not have to be this way.  
We have not been careful with  
all the magnificent wings,  
the curious creatures,  
and their homelands.

The damage we have done  
to nature is so terrible  
not even a magician  
could fix it.

It's stunning what humans  
before us  
have done to this  
awesome environment.

We have a chance  
to save this planet  
for every beauty that still exists.

So I ask you  
to put magic in your eyes  
just by appreciating  
what you see.

Only we can share  
our love with nature.  
We can make the impossible possible.  
We could make magic happen!



*People and Wildlife  
Living in Harmony*

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy  
P.O. Box 2088  
Purcellville, VA 20134-2088

*Address Service Requested*

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
PURCELLVILLE, VA  
PERMIT NO. 6

Please check your mailing label  
carefully and report any errors or  
changes to [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org)

## *Join us in Celebrating 20 Years!*

**F**or 20 years Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy has been a leader in protecting, advocating, and educating for wildlife. As the human population has grown, we are proud our impact has grown, too. Our efforts are shaping the future for wildlife – not just in our own back yards, but also for those that pass through on great migrations. Today, wildlife needs our help more than ever.

We want the next 20 years and beyond to reflect our passion for protecting habitats and connecting people with nature. ***But it isn't possible without you.*** Loudoun Wildlife can't survive without the contributions of our members, donors and volunteers.

Please show your support today with a generous donation in honor of our 20th anniversary.

***You are the hope for the future.***

**Join, renew, donate or volunteer today.  
Go to [www.loudounwildlife.org](http://www.loudounwildlife.org).**



Box turtles have a potential lifespan of 100 years.  
Will they still be found in Loudoun County 100 years  
from now? Photo by Kevin Munroe