

Habitat Herald

A Publication of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
Summer 2016 Volume XXI, Issue 2



Great Egret
Photo by Katherine Daniels

Wading Birds of Loudoun County by Emily B. Cook

When out for an early morning walk, there is nothing quite like the sense of serenity and peace that results from observing a wading bird gliding gracefully along the shoreline of a pond. It is often mesmerizing to watch as the bird places each foot with such intention and precision, seemingly in slow motion, and suspends itself in what appears to be an unnatural position as it patiently watches for prey.

In eastern Loudoun, where the Chesapeake Bay Watershed is made up of an intricate web of rivers, streams and marshland, we are very fortunate that our area offers an abundance of habitat attractive to many waders such as herons, egrets and bitterns. Some of the more commonly seen waders in our local area include the Great Blue Heron, the Green Heron, and the Great Egret, but it is not uncommon to see or hear other varieties of herons, egrets and bitterns as well.

With an increasing focus on maintaining and preserving our wetlands here in Loudoun County, as well as the ongoing efforts to improve water quality and protect nesting and breeding areas during development, we make Loudoun desirable to these graceful and interesting birds. In fact, when comparing results from the 1985-89 Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas to the Loudoun County Bird Atlas project that wound up last year, we see a 6 percent increase in waterfowl of all

kinds, including waders. In large part, this may be due to the increased availability of desirable habitat.

The Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) is the largest in the heron family, and is also the most abundant in North America as well as our immediate area. With a length of approximately 3-4 feet, and a wingspan that can easily reach 6 feet, they are an impressive bird on land as well as in the sky. Perhaps the most easily identifiable characteristic of the Great Blue Heron is the wisp of black feathers that sweep across the top of its piercing yellow eyes. Almost like a thick brow, these feathers extend past the back of its cream-colored head giving the impression of an elderly scholar. The heron's long S-shaped neck is adorned with delicate, feathery cream plumage – a beautiful contrast to its grey-blue body.

Great Blue Herons can be found year-round in Loudoun County. They are typically colonial nesters, building their nests from small twigs, grasses, mosses and leaves in large communal groups. Nests are high up in trees whenever possible to avoid predation by mammals and snakes and the same nests are often used year after year. A heron's breeding and nesting area, which is referred to as a rookery or heronry, is quite an impressive sight – and is sometimes right under our noses. One of the largest rookeries in our area is located along Loudoun

■ Continued on page 3

In This Issue:

President's Message	2	Eastern Cricket Frog	7	Programs and Field Trips	12
Celebrating Birds	4	Plight of the Monarch	8	Crayfish	15
Tips for Monarchs and Milkweed	5	Nooks and Crannies	10		
Wild Bergamot	6	Announcements	11		

Message from our President

by Katherine Daniels

Experts say that experiencing healthy natural environments may actually stimulate our senses, accelerate our creativity and enhance our ability to feel. Yet the majority of people, in general, are becoming less connected to nature. We live and work in more populated settings and have less wild nature in our lives. This disconnect leads to us preserving fewer healthy habitats and wildlife as we expand our county. So how do we build an organization that connects more people to nature? How is it funded and supported?

What we offer at Loudoun Wildlife is mostly free to participants, underwritten by your membership and donations, a few grants and our fundraising. We center on four main themes: Education, Citizen Science, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Advocacy. So what does this actually mean?

Each year, we have over 100 speaker and field trip programs where we bring in experts to present programs about specific wildlife and habitats, and we have volunteer naturalists who lead nature and birding walks every month, including our "Going Wild" walks for families. We have volunteers who write, edit and provide photographs for our amazing and informative quarterly newsletter, and we support a content-rich website and social media full of information. But we always need more help.

Citizen Science projects are available for both novices and leaders who want to apply what they're learning in a meaningful way. Anyone can do it. It's fun getting out in the field, exploring Loudoun's natural areas and collecting wildlife data. We team up to count butterflies and birds, monitor amphibians and identify breeding birds and migrating species. We compile our records and share them with national organizations. We use data to better understand wildlife populations and behaviors. We need volunteer team leaders, data sorters and participants to keep things going.

The greatest threat to diversity of wild nature is from loss of natural habitats, so we train volunteers to create, restore and teach others about healthy habitats. Did you know our Audubon at Home ambassadors are just volunteers who want to learn more about native plants and their wildlife values? We train about a dozen ambassadors yearly. They team up and visit homes and businesses – at no charge – to help people create more wildlife-friendly spaces, and perhaps certify their native gardens as wildlife habitats. We help people install pollinator gardens with milkweed and nectar plants, and teach them to raise Monarch butterflies. To thrive, wildlife needs large habitats, so we take on larger restoration projects and restore stream buffers and meadows. It takes a village of project managers and other volunteers to keep this going.

We find or develop volunteers who can give wildlife a voice in our conservation advocacy committees. We engage on county land use decisions. We mediate disputes between humans and wildlife. We help volunteers make changes in their neighborhoods or HOAs.

We know you love nature and hope you'll volunteer with us to help lead new people just entering the journey at Loudoun Wildlife. That's what a volunteer-driven nonprofit is all about.

We want to live in a place where people are connected to nature and make decisions with the extraordinary value of wild nature in mind. Please find a way you can engage with us and help us fulfill this vision. If you're already participating or volunteering, think about stepping up to the next level – teach others, lead or serve on a team or committee, donate money or offer land for a nature center. We are responsible to future generations for what is saved and what is destroyed. Loudoun County and Loudoun Wildlife need you.



Katherine Daniels
Photo by Sharon Moffett

Managing Editors: Sharon Plummer, Donna Quinn
Lead Editor: Steve Allen
Contributing Editors: Mary Ann Good
Proofreaders: Joe Coleman, Donna Quinn, Tracy Albert, Jill Miller
Production: Tracy Albert
Design: Chroma Imaging, Herndon, VA
Printed by: Mr. Print, Purcellville, VA

Copyright © 2016 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 Sharon Plummer at splummer@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 quarterly. 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.

Loudoun Wildlife now has staffed office hours at Morven Park.

OFFICE INFORMATION
Please check www.loudounwildlife.org for hours of our office headquarters.
Carriage Museum, Morven Park
17263 Southern Planter Lane
Leesburg, VA 20176
703-777-2575

Executive Director	Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org
President	Katherine Daniels	703-777-2575	kdaniels@loudounwildlife.org
Vice President	Joe Coleman	540-554-2542	jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org
Secretary	Bill Brown	703-777-2575	bbrown@loudounwildlife.org
Treasurer	Patti Psaris	703-777-2575	ppсарis@loudounwildlife.org
Board of Directors			
	Hatsy Cutshall	703-624-2607	hcushall@loudounwildlife.org
	Alysoun Mahoney	703-855-4033	amahoney@loudounwildlife.org
	Jim Walters	703-727-5555	jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org
	Jill Miller	703-777-2575	jmiller@loudounwildlife.org
	Phil Paschall	540-882-3027	ppaschall@loudounwildlife.org
	Sarah Steadman	703-777-2575	sssteadman@loudounwildlife.org
Programs			
Amphibian Monitoring	Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org
Audubon at Home	Ann Garvey	540-882-4405	agarvey@loudounwildlife.org
Bird Surveys	Joe Coleman	540-554-2542	jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org
Bluebird Monitoring	Karla Etten	703-777-2575	ketten@loudounwildlife.org
Butterfly Count	Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org
Conservation Advocacy	Vacant		
Development	Patti Psaris	703-777-2575	ppсарis@loudounwildlife.org
Habitat Herald	Sharon Plummer	703-505-7001	splummer@loudounwildlife.org
Habitat Restoration	Vacant		
Membership	Vacant		
Monarch Campaign	Nicole Hamilton	703-777-2575	nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org
Programs / Field Trips	Jim Walters	703-727-5555	jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org
Stream Monitoring	Dave Manning		
Volunteer Engagement	Hannah Duffy	703-777-2575	hduffy@loudounwildlife.org
Youth & Family Programs	Sarah Steadman	703-777-2575	sssteadman@loudounwildlife.org
Staff			
Bird Atlas Coordinator	Spring Ligi	301-694-5628	sligi@loudounwildlife.org
Communications Specialist	Jill Miller	703-777-2575	jmiller@loudounwildlife.org
Volunteer / Outreach Specialist	Kelly Senser	703-777-2575	ksenser@loudounwildlife.org



■ Wading Birds of Loudoun County, continued

County Parkway, just south of Route 7, directly across from the One Loudoun development. There have been as many as 70 nests during any given breeding season and the trees are a flurry of activity during spring and summer. Another reported nesting location is in close proximity to the Route 340 bridge in Washington County, just over the Loudoun County line.

The Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*), which somewhat resembles a bittern in body style and manner, is a bit harder to spot among reeds and marsh grasses, but is well worth the effort. Stocky and shorter-legged compared to many others in the heron family, the Green Heron is no less beautiful. Deep iridescent green feathers adorn his head and back gradually transition to a rich, deep chestnut on his chest and underbelly. Occasionally, the Green Heron will stretch out his typically contracted neck and raise the feathers on his head into a crown, showing off his own regal elegance.

While some of his longer-legged cousins can wade a bit deeper in search of a meal, Green Herons prefer more densely vegetated shallows along waters' edge where they can patiently wait for prey. They will, however, dive into deeper waters if an irresistible catch swims by. They are one of only a few birds that use tools and lures such as twigs, worms, feathers and other objects to attract and bait prey.

A Green Heron is often heard before being seen; its loud "skeow" alarm call is associated with the chorus of the wetlands. With handsome good looks and a chatty personality, it is no surprise the Green Heron was selected as American Birding Association's Bird of the Year for 2015. Green Heron pairs build stick nests in forks of trees, usually near water. They winter in Mexico and Central America and return each spring for breeding.

Egrets are also frequently seen throughout Loudoun County, with the Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) being more prevalent. Great Egrets are easily spotted because of their alabaster white plumage and long, graceful lines. They can be distinguished from their slightly smaller cousin the Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) by the Great Egret's yellow bill and dark feet. As with other wading birds, they are most easily viewed at the water's edge, but the egret has also been known to forage among cattle in a flooded pasture or boggy field following a heavy rain.



Green Heron

Photo by Katherine Daniels

Great Egret pairs nest individually as well as in colonies, and occasionally communally with other waders. As with most waders, they prefer to nest high off the ground to avoid predators. Locally, one reported nesting area is along the Potomac River near Harper's Ferry for those interested in getting a closer look.

Once hunted for their pristine white feathers, the Great Egret's numbers were substantially diminished in the late 1800s but protections put in place during the early 1900s allowed populations to gradually recover. Today, generally declining water quality and diminishing wetlands are problematic for egrets and other waders but efforts to respect existing wetland areas, limit public access to waterways and protect breeding grounds, have had a tremendously positive effect.

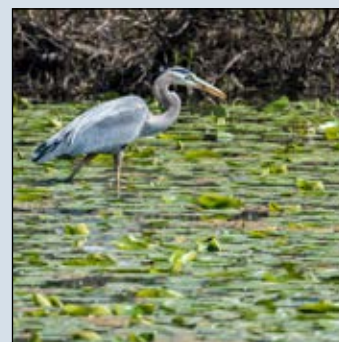
Several other waders are often spotted in our county periodically, but are not as abundantly represented. These include the American Bittern, Lesser Bittern, Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, Black- and Yellow-Crowned Night Herons, and Cattle Egrets. None have established breeding colonies here in Loudoun County yet, but with populations as close by as Fairfax County, it is entirely possible with our continued efforts to create and protect wetlands that we may see these waders establish nesting here in the future.

Many locations throughout Loudoun offer bird enthusiasts an opportunity to see wading birds. In eastern Loudoun, marshy areas near Trump National Golf Course and the adjacent parkland that is part of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail often host Great Blue Heron, Green Heron and egrets and bitterns. Further west, the Broadlands Wetlands and Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project are great places to see waders. Of course, anywhere along the shallow edge of the Potomac will often result in viewing opportunities of waders and other species of waterfowl as well.

The key to spotting waders, or really wildlife of any kind, is by practicing persistence, patience and peace. If you wish to commune with and observe wading birds, then you need to respect and maintain the tranquility of their environment. Sharp, loud noises or quick movements startle these patient hunters long before you even know they were there. Some waders are more elusive than others, and some are just the masters of camouflage hiding in plain sight, but if you know how and where to look for them, you will find consistent success and reward.

Sources:

- <http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/mbr/erwin.htm>
- http://www.pbse.com/btblue/wading_birds
- <http://www.pwconserve.org/wildlife/birds/>
- <https://www.audubon.org/bird-family/herons-egrets-bitterns>
- <http://thewebsiteofeverything.com/animals/birds/Ciconiiformes/>
- <http://www.birds-of-north-america.net/>
- <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/>



Great Blue Heron

Photo by Katherine Daniels

"An Epic Day of Birding" – Celebrating Birds 2016

by Joe Coleman

One of the Raven Loonatics, Larry Meade, wrote these words about May 7, the day they found an astounding 128 species of birds in Loudoun County! The Raven Loonatics, made up of Bruce Hill, Gerco Hoogeweg, Larry Meade, and Donna Quinn, went on to write that they found a new species at almost every one of their stops including an American Bittern at Bles Park, a Sora and a Cliff Swallow at the Broadlands Wetlands, a Hooded Merganser family, and many more birds at a number of locations scattered throughout Loudoun County. Of their 23 warbler species, 16 were observed at Algonkian Regional Park.

That same day, our newest team, the Veery Good Birders, consisting of two dynamite high school student birders, Daniel Carrier and Elliot Bernard, plus Pidge Troha and Jane Yocom, found 116 species, a total no other team except the Raven Loonatics had previously attained. Their highlights included Black-billed Cuckoo, Marsh Wren, Gadwall, 19 warbler species, two Virginia Rails, Wilson's Snipe, and Swainson's Thrush.

Shrike Force - Joe Coleman, Mary Ann Good, Nicole Hamilton, and Laura McGranaghan - beat their personal best Birdathon by finding 116 species birding for 24 hours beginning the afternoon of May 13. Their avian highlights included a large raft of Ruddy Ducks (at least 75) on Beaverdam Reservoir along with a flock of 12 Common Loons, four Common Nighthawks flying over the Goose Creek, a male and female Hooded Merganser at the Dulles Greenway Wetlands (also seen the week before by both the Raven Loonatics and the Veery Good Birders), an American Bittern in western Loudoun, and displaying American Woodcocks along Appalachian Trail Road. Like the other teams they also found a lot of warblers, 19 species, with many of them being at the Blue Ridge Center. One of their saddest moments was finding an ailing Barn Owl nestling on the floor of a silo that had apparently fallen from its nest and needed to be rushed to a wildlife rehabilitator. Unfortunately, it died later that

day. Shrike Force also stopped to move two turtles from busy roads.

All of the teams talked about how much fun they had in the field and how fantastic the birding was in spite of it raining on almost every effort. The Ligi Nestlings, comprising Spring Ligi and her three young daughters, began their day at the Blue Ridge Center with a Wild Turkey and several other nice sightings. The Larkolinks (Sally Brenton, Laureen Megan, Debra Gutenson, Zoe Sowers and

Dale Ball) exceeded their previous personal best day and the Grumpy Old Men (Paul Miller, Bruce Johnson, Dave Van Tassel, John Unger, Bob Noe, Rockie Fera and Phil Daley) reported a great, though mostly wet, effort.

In fact, while the first two weeks of May was one of the wettest such periods in memory, and all but one of the bird walks and most of the Birdathon efforts encountered rain, bird migration was incredible this year. Between the six teams that participated in the Birdathon and the six walks we sponsored, almost

150 species of birds were observed,

leading many of us to comment that it was the best birding we had ever encountered in Loudoun County. And in spite of the weather, all of the walks were well attended.

There were many non-avian highlights as well. Shrike Force saw and photographed two different groups of Red Fox kits and at one point thought they were going to need to shoo one group out of the road at the Blue Ridge Center so they could pass. An adult Red Fox was also the highlight sighting for the Ligi Nestlings.

As Spring Ligi wrote in her blog posting, the Birdathon "provides a unique opportunity to raise money for the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. The money will be used to support bird-friendly educational programs, habitat restoration, and citizen science projects." Almost every Birdathon team raised over \$1,000 for a total somewhere between \$8,000 and \$9,000.



Blue-winged Teal Photo by Laura McGranaghan



Shrike Force



Raven Loonatics



The Ligi Nestlings



Tips for Monarchs and Milkweed from the Audubon at Home Ambassadors



Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)
Photo by Katherine Daniels

provide food and fuel for monarchs and other pollinators. These splashes of color are beacons calling Monarch butterflies in for a much needed drink of nectar. The colors Monarchs seem to be most attracted to are red, orange, yellow and purple. You can create these bursts of color and nutrition by choosing several different native plants (usually from 5-7 of each) from the list of the Monarchs' top 15 plants (see link below). Be sure to include asters and goldenrods, as they help build the Monarchs' fat stores for the long journey to Mexico and to sustain them over long winter months. Remember that no matter how much milkweed you have, without nectar plants it is unlikely you will get any Monarchs.

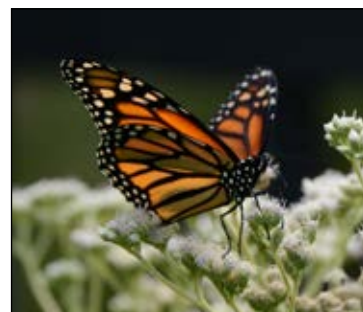
Your milkweed plants may have lots of visitors besides Monarchs. Research now shows over 450 different species of insects use milkweed for nectaring, food and/or shelter. Most of these are completely harmless to plants and caterpillars. One you might see frequently is the red and black Large Milkweed Bug (*Oncopeltus fasciatus*), which eats only seeds of the plant. The Small Milkweed Bug (*Lygaeus kalmia*), also red and black, prefers seeds as well, but will eat other parts of the plant until seeds are available.

Two other possible milkweed visitors are bright yellow Oleander Aphids (*Aphis nerii*) and Milkweed Tussock Moth caterpillars (*Euchates egle*). Oleander Aphids appear early in the season to suck juices found in buds, new shoots and foliage. They secrete a fluid that may cause leaves to look black. They have two predators to help keep them in check, the parasitic wasp and Ladybug beetles. If you are concerned about having large numbers of aphids on your milkweed you can carefully check for Monarch eggs or first instar caterpillars (very carefully, they are tiny!) then spray with water to knock off the aphids. Another method is to knock off aphids with a small brush. The Milkweed Tussock Moth caterpillar generally appears in late summer. These moths typically feed on older milkweed plants, so unless your milkweed is very limited in supply, there's no need to do anything about them.

Now, for the first time in its history, gardening has taken on a role that transcends the needs of the gardener. Like it or not, gardeners have become important players in the management of our nation's wildlife. It is now within the power of individual gardeners to do something that we all dream of doing: to make a difference.

Doug Tallamy, Bringing Nature Home

While developing your Monarch waystation by expanding the space for milkweed plants essential for monarch reproduction, you should not forget the importance of nectar plants that



Monarch nectaring on Boneset
(*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)
Photo by Katherine Daniels



Large Milkweed Bug
Photo by Donna Quinn

Want to know more about what to plant in our gardens to help Monarchs?

Monarch Waystations:

http://www.loudounwildlife.org/Monarch_Campaign_Plant_Waystations.html

The Importance of Nectar by Dr. Chip Taylor:

http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/nectar_lipid_graph.html

15 Plants for Monarch Waystations:

http://www.loudounwildlife.org/PDF_Files/Monarchs_Plants_for_Waystations.pdf

Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) – a balm for bees and pollinator powerhouse

by Donna Quinn

The Monardas are peculiarly adapted to the visits of butterflies, although they are also commonly visited by bees, the bumblebee in particular.

F. Schuyler Mathews, Fieldbook of American Wildflowers, 1902



Lavender pink drifts of Wild Bergamot
Photo by Donna Quinn

Even if Wild Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) offered nothing but its simple beauty, it would be appreciated. But in addition to creating attractive lavender-pink floral drifts through meadows and home gardens, it is highly valued by pollinators for its sweet nectar, and by humans for its medicinal, aromatic, culinary and aesthetic qualities. Wild Bergamot, commonly called bee balm along with others in the *Monarda* family, is one of several beneficial native bee balms found in natural as well as cultivated landscapes. Home gardeners may be more familiar with its cousin with red flowers *Monarda didyma*, which is highly desired by hummingbirds.

A member of the mint family (*Lamiaceae*), what is thought of as a flower is actually a cluster of 20 or more flowers arranged in a round head. Like other mints, it has paired leaves, a square, hollow stem, deep-branched roots and shallow rhizomes that allow the plant to spread vegetatively. The name *fistulosa* refers

to the flowers' tubular or pipe shape, a perfect design for long-tongued bees, butterflies, moths and hummingbirds. Even those without a long tongue seek its nectar and will sometimes chew a hole at the base of the flower to steal it.

Wild Bergamot grows 2 to 4 feet tall in sunny dry locations and blooms mid to late summer. It grows readily in the home garden in all but wet locations. Like many other native plants, it doesn't need any pampering in the garden to thrive. In fact, in rich soil it grows too lanky. It is susceptible to powdery mildew in humid or wet conditions and care should be taken to place it in a location with good air circulation.

The entire plant above the roots is edible. Flowers and leaves are used as an herb for flavoring food as well as decorative garnish. Its pleasant citrus mint fragrance is similar to that of bergamot oranges; oils from plants in the bee balm family are used in perfumes. Bergamots contain thymol, a natural antiseptic, used in mouthwashes, toothpastes and skin ointments. Native American uses include treatments for headaches, sore throats, congestion, gas, nausea, cramps, acne and insect bites. Pulverized leaves soothe bee stings; it is truly a balm for bees.

Bee balms played an important role in our country's political history. *Monarda didyma*, a close cousin of Wild Bergamot, provided tea-starved colonists with a tasty tea during the Revolutionary War. Bee balms quickly became a staple in the colonial garden. Although not caffeinated, bergamot tea surely helped calm and soothe during anxious revolutionary times.

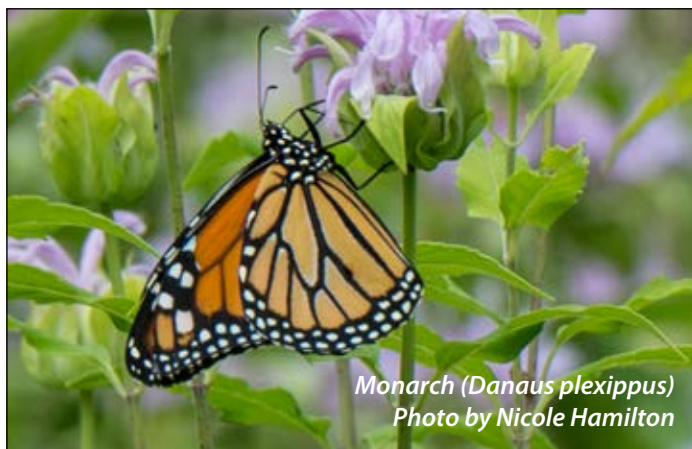
*A bee balm by any other name would smell as sweet... Confused by the name?
Plants in the Monarda family are commonly called bee balm as well as bergamot.*



Wild Bergamot is a favorite of butterflies, clearwing hummingbird moths, bees, bumblebees and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. In the native landscape or at home, a patch of Wild Bergamot provides hours of fascination observing a steady stream of lively and colorful pollinators. This pollinator powerhouse asks little yet offers much.

Resources:

- Mathews, F. Schuyler. Fieldbook of American Wildflowers. (The Knickerbocker Press 1902).
- Sanders, Jack. Secrets of Wildflowers: A Delightful Feast Of Little-Known Facts, Folklore, And History (Lyons Press 2014).
- www.altnature.com/gallery/bee-balm.htm
- <http://herbs.lovetoknow.com/bergamot>
- <http://www.hgtv.com/design/outdoor-design/landscaping-and-hardscaping/fact-about-bee-balm>
- Xerces Society. Gardening for Butterflies (Timber Press 2016).



Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*)
Photo by Nicole Hamilton

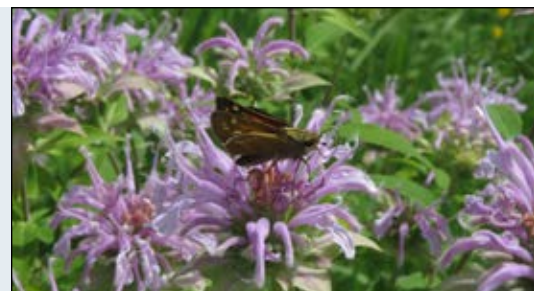
Sachem Skipper (*Atalopedes campestris*), Wild Bergamot close up
Photo by Donna Quinn

Would you like to grow Wild Bergamot in your native plant garden? Find it and other organically grown natives at:

www.hillhousenativeplants.com

www.watermarkwoods.com

www.nature-by-design.com



Eastern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*) by Kerry Bzdyk

Recently a visitor from out of town sat in my backyard as the sun went down and remarked that as dark descended around us, the chorus of frogs increased in volume. It reminded her of an orchestra reaching a crescendo. This frog symphony begins in March with the welcome sound of spring peepers and wood frogs, followed in later spring by American toads and other frogs. So much joyful noise in the evening! If you are lucky enough to live near a pond or slow-moving waterway you may also hear the distinctive rattling sound of the Eastern Cricket Frog joining the party.

The Eastern or Northern Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*) is a small frog only reaching a size of 1 to 1½ inches. It has moist, warty skin and a dark triangular shape between the eyes as well as a stripe or Y-shaped median marking along its back. The shade of this marking varies and can be green, russet, brown, yellow or gray. The breeding season lasts into July, and the female lays eggs singly or in small groups on blades of grass or along the bottom of a shallow pond or slow moving stream. Tadpoles have a distinctive black tip on their tails and complete their metamorphosis by late summer. These frogs are not picky about their diet and are considered opportunistic predators, eating many kinds of insects. They prefer sunny banks and are often found on the grassy edges of ponds, wetlands and even ditches.

What sets Eastern Cricket Frogs apart is the unique sound of their calls. The species name *crepitans* comes from the Latin word "crepit" (rattle), and refers to the rattle-like sound they make. It can also be

compared to the sound of two rocks being hit together, first slowly and increasing in speed for about 30 beats. A large population of cricket frogs can indeed sound like many rattles or raspy crickets.

So if you are fortunate enough to enjoy a summer evening near some wet and wild space in Loudoun County, listen for the unique calls of these little frogs amongst the chorus.

Reference:

- www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/amphibians/frogsandtoads/eastern-cricket-frog/eastern_cricket_frog.php

Eastern Cricket Frog
Photo by Liam McGranaghan





Tattered Splendor, Survivors of the Storm – the plight of the Monarch continues



*Welcome the new generation with
a Monarch Waystation*

Photo by Nicole Hamilton

by Nicole Hamilton, Executive Director

*Mysterious and little known creatures live within
reach of where you sit. Splendor awaits in minute
proportions.*

E.O. Wilson

As I write this, sitting next to my garden, I have visions of Monarch butterflies dancing through the nectar plants of Joe Pye weed, goldenrod, bergamot and asters, and tiny caterpillars gobbling up the bounty offered by milkweed that grows here.

But as I think of them, I also think of the journey and the relay of life that played out over the past few months that would lead to their arrival this summer.

The last time I saw Monarch butterflies in my garden was last fall. It was October and that last Monarch of the season, along with millions of others across our country, was in migratory motion on a southerly course headed directly to the overwintering sanctuaries in Mexico.

As they crossed into Mexico, Hurricane Patricia unfurled before them but they diverted their path, missed the storm and pressed on en masse. On November 4, we heard that they had arrived in the sanctuaries.

The population looked good, a modest rebound from prior years due to good conditions through 2015. As the Monarchs settled in to the sanctuaries to cluster on trees, scientists went in to survey the population and they estimated it at 4.01 hectares, up from 1.13 hectares in 2015 and 0.67 in 2014. We were all happy. We needed a good year. The population has been making a stair step down over the past 20 years and while one year does not mean success, it was a step in the right direction.

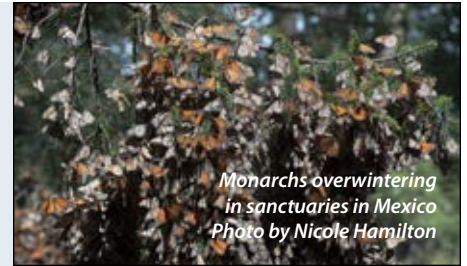
As late February rolled in, Monarchs started to stir and get ready for their journey north. These travelers, these tiny creatures weighing less than a paperclip, who had not only flown as many as 3,000 miles already but also survived for nine months, had one more trip to make - a final 500 plus mile flight to Texas and beyond to find milkweed, lay eggs and pass the baton of life on to the first generation of 2016.

We followed on Facebook, the Monarch Watch listserv and Journey North as friends in Mexico shared photos and videos from the sanctuaries. They were full of life! They were mating. They were getting ready for that last great act of their lives.

Then, on March 8 the terrible news came in: a severe winter storm had hit the Monarch sanctuaries. Strong winds and freezing rain with sleet and snow whipped through the Oyamel forests where Monarchs sought their refuge. Trees toppled like sticks, huge swaths of forest were felled in an instant. Wet, freezing rain persisted and by the time the storm had cleared three days later at least 50 percent of the Monarch population had perished. Of those that survived, many had cell and wing damage. For many, these injuries would be too severe for them to complete that last 500-mile flight.



When we plant a garden that includes both milkweed and other native nectar plants, we not only bring back Monarchs but also support the whole community of bees and other pollinators with them because they use the same habitat.



But among the survivors there were those that were strong enough, and the future of the population rode with them. The drive of life roared, mating continued and by March 23 these survivors of the storm had departed. The final act of the population of 2015 was underway.

By March 31, we started to hear news of the travelers reaching Texas. Monarchs were finding fields and gardens and milkweed and laying eggs. Sure, their wings were tattered and their bodies tired, but they had arrived and they were setting the stage for 2016.

Through April and May we watched the migration and relay of life unfold south and west of us as people like you and me with Monarch waystations, in places like Texas and Kansas and North Carolina, submitted their sightings to Journey North. We saw that the numbers were low. The population was fragile, but it was on its way and we were getting ready to receive them.

I am writing this article in the midst of this migration, in the middle of this story. So, I don't know when it will be, but soon – we will look out to our own gardens and we will catch that familiar flash of orange and black. It will be one of the grand-daughters of a survivor of that March 8 storm that dances through our flowers and

lays eggs on our milkweed. The relay of life continues because we make choices and we plant native milkweed and nectar plants to welcome and support them.

We have witnessed the Monarch population decline over the past 20 years and in fact, the USGS released its long-range population study this past spring, which concluded that the Monarch population has a "substantial probability of quasi-extinction over the next 20 years". Yes, you read that right - within 20 years the Monarch numbers could dwindle to so low a level that the species may not be able to rebound. And what if there were another severe storm in the overwintering grounds? Would the migration continue at all?

Good news? We created the situation that we are in today through decisions that we made, and through that same ability, we can turn it around. It is our choice. We have a role to play and a short window of 20 years to do it in, but the good news is that we still have a window and that it is open for us to fly through.

So, here I sit, knees bent against the soil once again, a trowel in hand, a milkweed plant ready to grasp the earth and take root. The solution is in our hands. Every day is an opportunity for every one of us and splendor awaits in minute proportions.

Tattered, but this survivor of the storm made it to Texas
Photo by Chuck Patterson in Texas



Nooks and Crannies - A Place for Families

Monarch Waystations: Schools and Scouts are "Keeping the Magic Alive" by Sarah Steadman

The magic of the Monarch butterfly's life cycle and migration has long enchanted children, but the Monarch's current plight for survival has the attention of our youngest citizen scientists for a very different reason. "Getting our hands dirty by planting a pollinator garden is really fun and we learn neat things about biology, but it's actually about species preservation because the Monarch butterfly can't survive without us now," says 11-year old conservation activist Carter Steadman. Two years ago, Carter engaged peers in planting a registered Monarch Waystation at his school, Hutchison Farm Elementary School in South Riding. The garden is a thriving habitat and has interested local Boy Scouts from Troops 282 and 2010 to join in the effort. "The best thing we can do right now is give the Monarch a place to find milkweed and native nectar plants and flowers," says Gabe Seymour, Carter's schoolmate and fellow Boy Scout who has helped care for the garden since it was planted. The pollination of this important message is in excellent hands with these young stewards!

All over Loudoun County, with the support of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, schools are planting pollinator gardens and waystations. "If kids could plant a garden at every school, it would make a pathway through Loudoun for migrating Monarchs," gushes Carter "...like a highway

for refueling and egg-laying." And that is just what Girls Scouts, led by teacher Cathy Polanski, are doing at Arcola Elementary School. A well-established garden is eagerly maintained by dozens of students and Scouts from Troops 6795, 6718, and 4799. Meeting after school to remove weeds and discuss summer maintenance plans, the students buzzed around the garden pulling weeds and inspecting the health of native plants, "careful to watch for milkweed that might be growing," they knowledgeably announce. Two hours and several large garden waste piles later, these Girl Scouts beam with the hope of Monarchs visiting this space. These amazing schools and scouts have partnered together in service to the Monarch, and they are inspiring others to have fun helping.

Join the many other Loudoun schools already gardening for Monarchs! Plant a new garden or form a garden club at your school's existing garden. We are happy to help: see resources and guidance at http://loudounwildlife.org/Monarch_Campaign.html.

Schools and Scouts: Let us know what you are doing for the Monarch and other pollinators. Send a message to ssteadman@loudounwildlife.org and we'll spotlight you online!



Brothers Nick & Gabe Seymour, Carter Steadman
Photo by Sarah Steadman



Girl Scouts working on their Monarch habitat patch
Photo by Sarah Steadman



*I only went for a walk and finally concluded to stay out
till sundown, for going out, I found, was going in.*

John Muir

K-12 photo contest: Loudoun's Great Places

Hey kids! This summer break, we want you to get out into Loudoun's GREAT nature centers, parks, streams, reservoirs, sanctuaries, mountains, riverfronts, gardens, and farms...and we want to SEE your experiences! Send us a favorite photograph of your summer adventures in these beautiful outdoor locations in Loudoun County. Winning photographs will be published in the upcoming Fall 2016 issue! Visit www.loudounwildlife.org for full Photo Contest Rules.

Announcements



GiveChoose

Thanks to all of our supporters who contributed to GiveChoose – A 24 hour online fundraising event organized by the Community Foundation of Loudoun and Northern Fauquier Counties. Its purpose was to bring the community together to support local nonprofit organizations.

Morven Park

A Loudoun County Birding Hot Spot



Come to Morven Park, one of Loudoun County's hottest birding locations. More than 100 species of birds have been seen there, including 15 species of warblers. Explore the Ridge and Lowland trails and you are sure to find some feathered treasures for the eye.

Dulles Greenway's Drive for Charity Sets Record High for Donations!

May 19, 2016, marked the 11th annual Dulles Greenway Drive for Charity which this year raised a record \$331,000!

The Drive for Charity provides funding to six nonprofits that work to benefit Loudoun County: March of Dimes, Every Citizen Has Opportunity (ECHO), Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter (LAWS), Fresh Air/Full Care, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, Loudoun Free Clinic and the Dulles Greenway Scholarship Program.

In eleven years, the Dulles Greenway has raised \$2.7 million for local charities and scholarships.

We are so thankful for the support of the Drive for Charity and the drivers who rode the Greenway on May 19!



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.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board Meeting — The Board typically meets quarterly. All Loudoun Wildlife members are welcome.

***Unless otherwise specified, contact info@loudounwildlife.org with questions.**

Butterflies of Loudoun Identification Class — Sunday, July 10, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., Winmill Carriage Museum, Morven Park. Learn tips and tricks for identifying 55 of our 85 local butterflies. Nicole Hamilton will lead the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy class in an indoor session. After the class, those who are interested can go outside to identify butterflies spotted in nearby gardens and wild and weedy areas. This is a great way to hone your skills and get ready for our 20th Annual Butterfly Count in August! Cost: \$5 members, \$10 non-members. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

"We're Going Wild" Family Nature Walk: The Magic of the Monarch — Sunday, July 17, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Claude Moore Nature Center. This morning walk, sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, will begin with a short

Morven Park Nature Walks

Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a free family nature walk through the grounds of beautiful **Morven Park**. The walks will cover a wide variety of topics including native woodlands, wetlands, birds, seasonal changes, as well as a variety of other topics. Check our website for more details. If you own binoculars, please bring them.

Registration required: Sign Up Online.



July 3, August 7, September 11, October 2, at 8:00 a.m.

Birding Banshee



Join 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.

Second Saturdays: July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8, at 8:00 a.m.

presentation all about the Monarch butterfly, a species at risk. Learn about the fascinating Monarch butterfly migration and life cycle, and explore a Monarch Waystation garden to learn about how you can help protect the Monarch in your own backyard. Space is limited to 15 children, ages 5+, with accompanying adult(s). NOTE: no strollers or pets. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Bird by Bird: A Weekday Morning Bird Walk for Kids — Thursday, July 21, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m., Morven Park. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a relaxing family outing to meet your local birds. You never know what you'll see, and that's part of the fun! Kids have a special ability to see and hear in their natural world, ask great questions, and get excited about new discoveries, so experienced local birders Ben and Suzette McIlwaine are leading this walk just for kids and their parents. Come out for a casual morning stroll and meet your local birds! Meet at the main parking lot. Space is limited to 15 children, ages 6+, with accompanying adult(s). NOTE: no strollers or pets. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

50 West Vineyards Event in Support of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy: Special Monarch Flights and a Movie — Friday, July 22, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Sit outside on a beautiful summer evening and enjoy a film about the journey of Monarch butterflies. Sample a special Monarch flight of wines, explore the pollinator gardens and the amazing Monarch waystation being established at 50 West, and learn what you



can do to help the Monarchs while they are in our area. **For more information on this family-friendly event, visit** <https://www.50westvineyards.com>.

Family Friendly Nature Event Series: Night Wings!

Celebrating National Moth Week — Friday, July 29, 7:00

– 10:00 p.m., Morven Park. Come discover why moths constitute about 90% of all the Lepidoptera on the planet, not bad for a group of animals that flew with some of our most well-known dinosaurs! Join Dr. David Adamski and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to celebrate National Moth Week and review the most common moth families found in the Capitol Region. After sunset, he'll help us identify the moths that are attracted to his blacklight set up on our wooded grounds.

Registration required: Sign Up Online.

Butterfly Harvest at Great Country Farms — Saturday and Sunday, July 30 and 31.

The most recognizable of all butterflies needs our HELP! The Monarch butterfly's population has diminished drastically due to, among other factors, the eradication of milkweed and other plants crucial to their habitat. Bring the family this weekend for blackberry picking and Monarch education, and take action to bring their habitat back. Visit the butterfly garden and learn about the plants Monarchs need to survive, and how you can help restore habitat in your community. **For more information visit** <http://greatcountryfarms.com>.

Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air — Friday, August 5, 6:00

– 8:00 p.m., Middleburg. They fascinate people of all ages: There are more than 300 species of hummingbirds, but which species are right here in your own backyards? At this family-friendly Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy program, learn about hummingbird species, diet and habitats, and witness their magical flight right before your eyes as local hummingbird enthusiast, Emily Southgate, enchants you with their magic. NOTE: no strollers or pets. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Let's Count Butterflies! — Saturday, August 6, 9:00 a.m.

It's time for Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's 20th Annual Butterfly Count! Come and have fun while contributing to butterfly conservation. You will visit locations that include butterfly gardens, sanctuaries, roadside wildflower areas and parks. We typically count over 2,000 butterflies in this single day and spot as many as 50 species. Our count circle stretches from White's Ferry in the east to the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Center in the west and south to Lincoln. No experience necessary, all ages welcome – you will be teamed with experienced leaders. There's a \$3 fee per adult that we pass through to the North American Butterfly Association, waived for Loudoun Wildlife members as a member benefit. No fee for those under 18. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**



Birding the Blue Ridge Center

Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on the monthly bird walk at the **Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship (BRCES)**, 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. BRCES is located just north of Neersville at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte. 671); detailed directions at www.brces.org.

Questions: Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

Fourth Saturdays: July 23, August 27, September 24, at 8:00 a.m.

"We're Going Wild" Family Nature Walk: Insect Safari!

— Sunday, August 14, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Temple Hall

Farm. WHAT IS THAT BUG? This morning walk, sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, will explore discoveries in the micro-world of insects! Local entomologist, Ed Clark of the USDA, will lead a hands-on investigation into the secret lives of insects that flit, buzz, and crawl about in late summer. Come dressed for outdoor adventure. Space is limited to 15 children, ages 7+, with accompanying adult(s). NOTE: no strollers or pets. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Monarch Butterfly Day at 868 Estate Vineyards —

Saturday, August 20, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and friends for a fun afternoon centered on Monarchs and other butterflies. Talk a stroll through the garden, enjoy some wine, and learn about and see Monarch caterpillars. For kids, we'll have some fun crafts and butterfly games. **For more information visit** <http://868estatevineyards.com>.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at the Lucketts Fair —

Saturday and Sunday, August 20 & 21, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Visit our booth at the Lucketts Fair, where we'll be showcasing the wonderful array of wildlife found in our county and the importance of saving habitat. The booth will feature hands-on displays, informational materials promoting our programs, and

■ Continued on page 14

**■ Programs and Field Trips, continued**

nature-themed merchandise for purchase. For more information about the fair, which is held annually on the grounds of the Lucketts Community Center, visit <http://theluckettsfair.com>. **Questions: Contact Kelly Senser at ksenser@loudounwildlife.org.**

Family Friendly Nature Event Series: Night Wings Part III! Backyard Bats — Friday, August 26, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m., Location TBD. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a great program to learn about our local bats! Leslie Sturges of the Save Lucy Campaign will describe the fascinating and enchanting world of bats, our only flying mammal, and how important they are. She will also introduce the seven species of bats, some of which are common and some rare, that call Loudoun County home. After the talk, Leslie will take us outside with her bat detector to find and identify all the bats we can! **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Birds, Butterflies and Wildflowers — Saturday, September 3, Time TBD, Blue Ridge Center. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a family-friendly field trip to see birds, butterflies and wildflowers that are found around the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship (BRCES). BRCES is a beautiful 900-acre preserve in northwestern Loudoun County that includes diverse wildlife habitats, including meadows, streams and heavily forested slopes. Meet at the Education Center; bring binoculars if you have them. BRCES is located just north of Neersville at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte 671); detailed directions at www.brces.org **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Native Plant Sale — Saturday, September 10, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Morven Park. Each patch of habitat in a native plant garden becomes a collective effort to nurture and sustain the landscape for birds, butterflies, bees and other animals. Restoring native habitat is essential to preserve biodiversity. A Fall planting of natives generally outperforms those installed in the Spring. Root growth in the Fall, when soils are warmer and more aerated, is more extensive, compared to Spring when there is rapid top growth. Hill House Farm and Nursery (www.hillhousenativeplants.com), Nature by Design (www.nature-by-design.com) and Watermark Woods (www.watermarkwoods.com) will be selling native plants, shrubs and trees at this sale sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. To see the plants each nursery carries or to place orders ahead of time (all nursery stock is not present at the sale), visit their websites. **Questions: Contact Ann Garvey at agarvey@loudounwildlife.org.**

“We’re Going Wild” Family Nature Walk: Meet Your Trees! — Sunday, September 11, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., Morven Park. What tree is that? Fall is a great time of year for going on a nature hike with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to learn about trees. Trail guide Alex Darr will offer tips and tricks for identifying our local trees by observing basic characteristics and a few other secrets trees can reveal. Meet in the Coach House parking lot above the Carriage Museum for the Ridgetop trail head. Space is limited to 15 children, ages 7+, with accompanying adult(s). NOTE: no strollers or pets. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Natural History of the Appalachian Trail — Saturday, September 17, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Blackburn Trail Center. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club as we discuss the natural history of the AT. The program will be followed with a short hike up to the AT and the nearby overlook, followed by light refreshments. Limit 20 participants. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**

Beginning Birding — Wednesday, October 12, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Location TBD. Learn the basics of this fascinating activity, which connects people with our most watchable wildlife. This Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy class consists of an evening indoor session followed by a morning bird walk at a local park on the following Saturday. The classroom session will focus primarily on bird identification skills, but will also touch on binoculars and field guides. The bird walk will be a chance to get outdoors, find and identify birds, and enjoy them in their natural setting. Cost: \$15 members, \$25 non-members. **Registration required: Sign Up Online.**



For up-to-date information on our programs and to sign up, visit our web site at www.loudounwildlife.org.

Crayfish *by Emily Bzdyk*



*Crayfish at Banshee Reeks Park
Photo by Emily Bzdyk*

While mucking around in local streams as a child, I loved finding crayfish hiding under rocks in the water and bringing them home to observe in an aquarium. It was always rewarding to watch the “miniature lobsters” pick along the bottom, their many legs passing food particles to their mouth, the antennae constantly searching ahead for more food or friend or foe.

Crayfish (also called crawfish, crawdads, or mudbugs) belong to the phylum *Arthropoda*; they are crustaceans like crabs and lobsters. Like their cousins the insects, Arthropods are characterized by jointed appendages on a segmented body, which is protected by a hard exoskeleton. Their skin cannot grow with them, so they must periodically molt. A crayfish has two main body sections: the cephalothorax and abdomen. They breathe through filamentous gills located inside the body at the base of their legs. They possess a pair of enlarged claws at the front of their body and 4 pairs of walking legs with small claws at the end of each. There are numerous feeding appendages around the mouth at the front of the body. They have a pair of compound eyes on the end of short stalks, a pair of antennae and a pair of antennules (smaller antennae).

Depending on the species, crayfish can be found in ponds, streams, rivers, marshes, and even drainage ditches. Some crayfish shelter under rocks while others burrow into mud near a body of water – sometimes forming distinctive mud “chimneys”. When crayfish reproduce, the female carries the 100-500 eggs in her

swimmerets, a set of short legs under her tail. She is said to be “in berry.” The young crayfish will also ride on her for up to a week before dispersing. Crayfish are mainly scavengers, feeding on decaying plant and animal material. They also will prey on invertebrates such as aquatic insect larvae and worms, but seldom catch fish. They are preyed upon by at least 240 species of animals, including large fish, raccoons and birds such as herons. Crayfish are a vital element in a healthy ecosystem.

There are 34 native species of crayfish in Virginia, as well as several non-native species. One such non-native is the Rusty Crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*), which is native to the Ohio River valley. It has distinctive large claws and rusty colored spots on the sides of its carapace. The Virile Crayfish (*Orconectes virilis*) is another non-native. They were likely spread by human activity, as crayfish are used as bait by fishermen and also used in biological research and the pet industry. These non-natives are large and aggressively outcompete our native species. In Virginia, the Big Sandy Crayfish (*Cambarus veteranus*), is listed as endangered and 13 other species are listed as “Species of Greatest Conservation Need.” To help stop the spread of non-natives, never purchase crayfish as bait or pets. If using them for fishing, only take as many as you will use and never release them into any body of water.



*Though we have 34 native species of
Crawfish, they can be hard to identify
Photo by Emily Bzdyk*

Sources:

- <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?speciesID=214>
- <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/vaisc/species/rusty-crayfish.htm>
- <https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/420/420-253/420-253.html>
- <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/virginia-wildlife/feature-spotlight/pdfs/crayfish-compendium.pdf>



*People and Wildlife
Living in Harmony*

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
P.O. Box 1892
Leesburg, VA 20177

Address Service Requested

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

*Drawing after the Birdathon
by the youngest Ligi Nestlings Team members:
McKenzie –age 9, Addison – age 6, Catherine –age 2*



Join, Renew for 2016, Donate Today!

Your support makes it possible for us to offer free nature programs that inspire and engage people in nature, lead citizen science projects that teach and provide data on wildlife and habitats of Loudoun, pay for plants and equipment to restore habitat, and develop robust positions needed to be your voice for wildlife.

Join/Renew/Donate Today:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ _____ Other Amount

Membership benefits (\$25 annual donation and higher) include: Habitat Herald mailed to you, Special Member Discounts at local businesses, Email announcement of programs/events, Annual meeting invitation.

Online: www.loudounwildlife.org/Join.htm

By Mail: Please check your information below, indicate any changes and return this form with your contribution to Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, PO Box 1892, Leesburg, VA 20177.

Donations of \$100 or higher also receive special recognition and additional benefits: \$100 or more - Supporter, \$250 or more - Steward, \$500 or more - Advocate, \$1,000 plus - Leaders Circle. Check the website for details!

Your donations are tax-deductable as allowable by law.