

# Habitat Herald

A Publication of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

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Winter 2024



## Doing Our Part with Carbon Sequestration at JK Black Oak

*by Gerco Hoogeweg, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary Committee*

Soil samples were taken from 26 locations at JK Black Oak, including this section of the oak-hickory forest, to help measure carbon sequestration levels over time.  
Photo by Gerco Hoogeweg



**W**ith all the news about climate change and what to do about it, you may have heard the term “carbon sequestration.” But what is it? Carbon sequestration is the capture and storage of carbon that would otherwise be emitted to or remain in the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is a well-known greenhouse gas and a contributor to global warming.

Carbon sequestration can be divided into two types: geologic and biologic.<sup>1</sup>

1. Geologic carbon sequestration is the process of storing carbon dioxide in underground geologic formations. The carbon dioxide is usually pressurized until it becomes a liquid, and then it is injected into porous rock formations in geologic basins. This is an artificial way of storing carbon.
2. Biologic carbon sequestration refers to storage of atmospheric carbon in oceans, soils, and vegetation. This is naturally occurring storage of carbon.

Practically speaking, biologic carbon sequestration usually focuses on increasing the number of trees in our landscape and increasing the carbon in the soil. Planting trees is a popular way to sequester carbon. Trees, shrubs, and plants need carbon dioxide to grow. Thus, the more trees we plant, the more carbon dioxide is stored. It is

Continued on page 4

## In This Issue

Executive Director's Message	2
Conservation Advocacy	3
Homeowner's Guide to Carbon Sequestration	5
Breathing New Life into Meadowscape	6
Writing in Nature at Morven Park	8
Christmas Bird Count Never Disappoints	10
Volunteer of the Quarter: Patrick Lewis	10
Programs & Field Trips	11
The Birdathon Is Coming!	15
Birdhouses & Barrels Auction: Feb. 15-22	16



## Executive Director's Message



We have hit the ground running in 2024, and we're looking forward to another busy year getting people outside and into nature, sharing our joy and passion for wildlife with others, inspiring more people to get involved, and raising our voices to protect and preserve our green spaces. We want to thank everyone who makes this possible, and we can't wait to see you at one of our many programs or events.

We are excited to bring back our Birdhouses and Barrels online auction this year. We have exquisite functional

art pieces created by local artists, as well as a variety of experience packages for you to bid on. This year our auction will run from February 15–22.

There will be other ways to give this spring. For example, you can join Loudoun residents for the Community Foundation's online day of giving, Give Choose, on March 19. This local day of giving showcases the power and dedication of our community, and we know that we can count on you to help make this event a success.

In April we will be hosting some of our signature events, including the Native Plant Sale on April 13 at Morven Park. Getting native plants into the gardens of people like you is a great way to create habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

Celebrate Birds walks and our Birdathon will begin on April 20 and continue until May 19. We're excited to offer other education programs and nature walks to complement these signature events.

And the Dulles Greenway is hosting the annual Run the Greenway on May 4.

We are proud to offer a wide variety of ways that you can get involved in nature and support our efforts to grow and get more people involved in the conservation of healthy wildlife habitats.

Thank you for contributing to our success!

Happy trails,

*Michael*

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Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that inspires, motivates, and engages people to protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat in Loudoun County. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board meets bi-monthly. Board meetings are open to all current members. For more information, or to suggest topics for discussion at upcoming meetings, contact Jim McWalters.

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# New Year Brings New Focus on Familiar Issues

by Trinity Mills, Conservation Advocacy Specialist

Though 2023 is behind us, many of the issues we are focusing on as the new year begins remain the same, including:

- The newly rewritten Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance.
- The progress of Loudoun Wildlife's dark skies campaign.
- The importance of advocating for wildlife conservation at the state level.
- Looming power infrastructure projects that would affect sensitive environments in our county.

## A New Zoning Ordinance

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance rewrite is finished! The Board of Supervisors voted to adopt the new ordinance during a public hearing on December 13.

The rewrite has been a lengthy process. Loudoun Wildlife stayed involved and engaged in submitting comments in favor of wildlife protection inclusions at each stage thus far, and we thank all of our volunteers who have helped with these efforts. Many beneficial additions and alterations have been made throughout the process, including provisions for incorporating and encouraging native plants and open space in new developments.

Many of our biggest concerns yet to be addressed are being tackled in future zoning ordinance amendments (ZOAMs). We will stay involved to ensure that our outstanding concerns are addressed as this process continues. Future ZOAM/Comprehensive Plan Amendment topics will include data center environmental sustainability policies and/or standards, rural uses and Western Loudoun, floodplain overlay district updates, use restrictions in the Mountainside Overlay District,

and a small area plan for the historic village of Lucketts. These prioritizations are decided at the start of the year as part of the county's Department of Planning and Zoning work plan. We will ask Loudoun Wildlife members to help us keep advocating for the most pertinent issues for wildlife to be addressed as a priority.

## Dark Skies

Our dark skies white paper has been published! This is the first stage in our ongoing campaign to protect dark skies in Loudoun. This effort arose from an emerging pattern of development applications containing excessive and unnecessary outdoor lighting. We'll also be undertaking an education program on the importance of dark skies and lights-out initiatives in conjunction with our spring Birdathon.

## State-level Advocacy

The Virginia General Assembly is in session! Loudoun Wildlife has been working with our partners at the Virginia Conservation Network (VCN) to advocate for wildlife conservation efforts at the state level. VCN's 2024 Our Common Agenda (OCA) handbook details the advocacy issues and policy

focuses for the General Assembly Session this year. Conservation Lobby Day in Richmond was January 31. Loudoun Wildlife attended to speak with Loudoun delegates and senators on OCA policy priorities, published in January, and their active corresponding bills. It's not too late to contact your representative to show your support for the still-active bills on our priority list.

## Power Line Construction

PJM, the regional transmission organization responsible for coordinating wholesale electricity movement in Virginia and 12 other states, recently announced that they have completed the first stage of approval for new major high-voltage transmission lines across Western Loudoun to meet data center power demand. The lines are tentatively slated to be constructed through environmentally significant areas such as Sweet Run State Park, Waterford National Historic Landmark, and multiple private conservation easement properties. We are working with the Piedmont Environmental Council, Waterford Foundation, and other concerned partners to oppose the harmful route choices of these projects.

**"We often forget that we are nature. Nature is not something separate from us. So, when we say that we have lost our connection to nature, we've lost our connection to ourselves."**

— Andy Goldsworthy



One of JK Black Oak's 17 tree seedling count plots. Photo by Sheila Ferguson

Carbon Sequestration, continued from page 1

calculated that we need to plant 2.3 billion acres of new trees to help limit the increase in global average temperature to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit above pre-industrial levels by 2050. This is a vast area that is almost 6,900 times the size of Loudoun County, or 1.2 times the size of the lower 48 states. Globally it translates into 25% more forests compared to what we now have.<sup>2</sup>



At JK Black Oak we are working on carbon sequestration, albeit on a small scale. Under the terms of the 2022 grant received from Microsoft in collaboration with the Society for Ecological Restoration, we need to estimate the amount of carbon that will be sequestered for our habitat restoration project. You can use online carbon calculators<sup>3</sup> to estimate how much carbon is stored in a tree if you know the number and size of the trees.

Instead of aiming for a traditional tree-planting approach to store carbon, we have elected to take a different path. Why not protect what is already there? So rather than digging holes, planting trees, and then watering and protecting them, we went straight to the "protecting" part. As part of the grant, we committed to protect at least 100 tree seedlings with cages and an unknown number of trees in three deer-exclusion areas. For the upcoming three years we will count

how many trees are growing in the deer-exclusion areas and how many seedlings will survive in the tree cages.



Counting each individual tree seedling within the deer-exclusion areas was an impossible task because more than 200 seedlings were found in a single transect during the first count. Therefore, we switched over to a proven and robust scientific approach of using count plots. Seventeen 5-foot by 5-foot plots were established. Within each of the plots, the seedlings were counted and marked. In this first year we estimated that within the three deer-exclusion fences between 7,000 and 7,200 tree seedlings were present — a staggering number. Obviously only a small fraction of those seedlings will survive. Because the tree seedlings are too small, we did not estimate the amount of carbon stored. Toward the end of 2024 we may run our first estimates of carbon storage.

Although soil carbon sequestration is mostly associated with agricultural activities, at JK Black Oak we will monitor soil carbon for the next three years. In the fall of 2023, 26 locations in and around the deer-exclusion areas and tree cages were sampled for soil carbon. The soil samples were mailed in specialized small boxes to the Soil Testing Lab at Virginia Tech<sup>4</sup> for analysis. In this first year we aimed to establish a baseline of the amount of carbon stored in the topsoil.



Gerco Hoogeweg collecting soil samples. Photo by Sheila Ferguson

#### Footnotes:

1 – <https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/whats-difference-between-geologic-and-biologic-carbon-sequestration#:~:text=Geologic%20carbon%20sequestration%20is%20the,rock%20formations%20in%20geologic%20basins.>

2 – <https://climate.nasa.gov/news/2927/examining-the-viability-of-planting-trees-to-help-mitigate-climate-change/>

3 – <https://8billiontrees.com/carbon-offsets-credits/reduce-co2-emissions/how-many-trees-offset-carbon-emissions/#:~:text=Nevertheless%2C%20given%20a%20single%20tree,successfully%20offset%20their%20carbon%20footprint.>

4 – <https://www.soiltest.vt.edu>





Soils collected at JK Black Oak have many different colors.  
Photo by Gerco Hoogeweg

The soil samples were taken from the top 8 inches, using a soil auger and probe. The samples were then cleaned using a 2mm soil sieve to remove all large particles, rocks, and root fragments. An 8-inch depth was used because the local soil survey maps showed that the top soil layer was anywhere between 7 and 9 inches thick, and 8 inches happens to be the size of the soil auger. During the sample collection, we noticed that the soil showed an amazing variety of colors. Really dark soils were found in the vernal pools, with red-colored soil along one of the trails, and more yellowish soils on the slopes and lower elevations.



Laboratory analysis showed that the soil organic matter (a way of expressing soil carbon) content ranged from 2.3% to 15.4%. The highest organic matter levels were found in the vernal pool soils. When the vernal pools are excluded, the soil organic matter ranged from 2.3% to 6.5%, with an average of 5.0% for the 0-8-inch depth. This information provides our initial baseline of soil carbon at JK Black Oak. It'll be interesting if we see increases in the soil carbon in the upcoming years. We expect to see little change until 10 to 20 years have passed.

#### Resources for Additional Information:

"How to Turn Your Backyard Into a Carbon Sink" -- <https://thinklandscape.globallandscapesforum.org/38003/how-to-turn-your-backyard-into-a-carbon-sink/>

"What Plants Are Best for Carbon Sequestration" -- <https://allnativeseed.com/what-plants-are-best-for-carbon-sequestration/#:~:text=As%20perennial%20plants%2C%20native%20grasses,along%20with%20reducing%20atmospheric%20carbon.>

## A Homeowner's Guide to Carbon Sequestration

Homeowners can create carbon sinks on their own properties. Even if you have little space to work with, there are some options you can consider.



**Planting native trees** is a sure way of sequestering carbon. Mature trees, especially hardwoods such as oaks, can live many hundreds of years and thus store a lot of carbon. By planting new trees, especially native trees, in your yard, you can also control erosion, attract beneficial insects, enjoy fresh fruit/nuts, and even reduce your home's energy needs through strategic shading.



Increasingly, **planting native grasses** is used for carbon sequestration. Many native grasses have deep, complex root systems that are well suited for storing carbon in the soil. Their root structures also help stabilize the soil, increase moisture levels, and retain nutrients. Perennial plants and native grasses are able to sequester carbon year-round without releasing it. This creates a healthier, more fertile soil along with reducing atmospheric carbon. Grasses are established much faster than trees and thus store carbon sooner. See the Plant NOVA Natives website (<https://www.plantnovanatives.org>) for advice on which natives to plant.



**Increasing the soil organic matter** can be achieved simply by leaving your yard clippings, grass, and leaves in the yard, rather than bagging them up. Leaves and other clippings will break down and form soil organic matter. Smaller clippings are quickly broken down, often within a few seasons. You can even create a compost pile with the clippings and use the compost to fertilize your yard.



For those with larger parcels of land and more room to play, you may want to consider **participating in a carbon sequestration exchange**. Some information on this can be found at the Land Trust Alliance website — <https://landtrustalliance.org/resources/learn/explore/a-landowner-s-guide-to-carbon-sequestration-credits>

— Gerco Hoogeweg





## Volunteers Breathe New Life into Meadowscape

by Susan Abraham and BJ Lechrone



Volunteers tackle the invasive overgrowth with weed whackers during a May 2023 work day at the site. Photo by Susan Abraham

In 2018, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy volunteers, in partnership with nearby residents, began to transform an overgrown, weedy patch of Leesburg into a native meadowscape. The 7,000-square-foot meadow borders Harrison Street and a busy section of the W&OD trail. A number of local groups have supported our habitat restoration effort here, including NOVA Parks, the Town of Leesburg, the Leesburg Garden Club, Susan Abraham Restoration Landscapes, and Northern Virginia Property Services.

The site was mowed, weeded, and raked, with over a thousand native species plugs planted more than the course of several seasons in 2018 and 2019. Unfortunately, the onset of Covid-19 slowed normal volunteer efforts to care for the site in 2020 and 2021, and it quickly became overrun with non-natives — a thriving seedbank of exotic plants surrounds the site. Managing invasive species is now a fundamental task for any landscape or garden project, as essential as general weeding, mulching, and watering. Until large-scale efforts to reduce populations of these aggressive non-native species become the norm, such



Volunteer Arunie Clark helps plant native grass plugs, purchased from Earth Sangha, during an October work day at the meadow. Photo by BJ Lechrone





plants will continue to become more established, and the need for constant vigilance to keep them at bay will not taper off.

In 2022, a group of 28 volunteers were called upon to cut back invasive plants from May through October to decrease the non-native seed bank at the site. We finished the season on October 29 by scattering thousands of native flower seeds that could increase plant growth in upcoming seasons.

Loudoun Wildlife marshaled volunteers again in the spring of 2023 to begin the process of rehabilitating the meadowscape back into a thriving pollinator garden to support native wildlife, as well as pique the curiosity of many passersby on the trail. A few additional local residents have also

stepped up to water and care for parts of the site. The 2023 drought likely had a negative impact on native plant growth in the meadow, particularly on the drier upper side. This is, unfortunately, a common consequence of drought. Reduced water availability can limit seed germination and seedling establishment.

With the leadership of Susan Abraham Restoration Landscapes, we will continue following a maintenance plan and watering schedule to restore the meadowscape through volunteer efforts and grant funding for new plants. Volunteer leaders will organize labor for a number of tasks each month, culminating in new plantings each fall through 2025.

Once a more stable community of plants is established, volunteers will continue monthly maintenance to keep non-native species at bay.

**Susan Abraham** is a sustainable landscape garden designer and a Virginia Master Naturalist.

**BJ Lecrone** is an Audubon at Home Ambassador and Virginia Master Naturalist.



Volunteers spread out to plant native grasses in October. Photo by Susan Abraham



An explosion of grasses and other invasives obscured much of the meadowscape by last May, thanks to the location's robust non-native seed bank. Photo by Susan Abraham





## Writing in Nature Workshop at Morven Park

by Geena Riverstone



Workshop participants find much to observe — and to inspire them — at the stream that runs alongside their Gate House meeting place. Photo by BJ Lechrone

Once a month, Loudoun Wildlife offers a Writing in Nature workshop at Morven Park in Leesburg. The 90-minute workshop is led by Nancy Morgan, who has a master's degree in transformative language arts, which is a therapeutic writing practice that helps people navigate life's challenges, reduce stress, and find peace of mind.

After Morgan retired and moved to Leesburg in 2016, she discovered several Loudoun Wildlife programs being offered near her. At that time, Morgan says, "new research about the health benefits of spending time in nature was widely publicized."

Before retiring, Morgan was director and writing clinician for the Georgetown Lombardi Arts and Humanities Program, where she helped people with cancer and their families and medical caregivers engage in the arts to address the emotional impact of illness. Morgan is an expert on teaching people how to feel better emotionally through the practice of expressive writing, or writing about thoughts and feelings.



Caroline Castagna jots down her thoughts during a summer workshop. Photo by BJ Lechrone

Through Loudoun Wildlife activities, Morgan met Ann Garvey, a master naturalist and longtime Loudoun Wildlife volunteer. Morgan and Garvey decided to collaborate on a nature activity to offer to the community: Garvey would lead a walk to explore wildlife, and Morgan would moderate a related writing workshop. After Garvey secured permission from Loudoun Wildlife leaders, the duo led a guided nature walk and writing workshop at Morven Park. Later, they led a similar combined activity at Rust Sanctuary.

Soon thereafter, Morgan designed a workshop that integrated research findings on the combined health benefits of writing and spending time in nature. In early 2021, she moderated a writing in nature workshop at Morven Park and was invited to do another. The workshop became a monthly event later that year.

Morgan says moderating the workshop is immensely satisfying, and many regular participants are equally enthusiastic. Martha Baine, a retired librarian and archivist who has been attending since July 2022, says, "I think about it during the month, looking forward to the next time."

A day or so before the workshop, participants receive an email with Morgan's theme for that month. Recent themes have explored metamorphosis, the interdependence of wildlife, and the importance of conserving natural resources.

After navigating the gravel road and parking outside the Morven Park Gate House, everyone meets at picnic benches underneath a magnolia tree. Or, if the weather is not cooperating, the group gathers inside the Gate House instead.





The group usually meets outside, though the weather occasionally drives them into the Gate House (which is also the headquarters of Loudoun Wildlife). Photo by BJ Lecrone



Blooming Wingstem greets the nature writers with a splash of yellow in October. Photo by BJ Lecrone

"We are here to strengthen our ties to nature," Morgan said during a recent workshop. "We are also creating a sense of community." Although participants represent diverse backgrounds, all share an appreciation for nature and language.

To introduce the month's theme, Morgan recites poetry, shares song lyrics, or reads prose. She further develops the theme by prompting a group discussion. Her warm and caring approach creates an environment where participants feel safe sharing their thoughts and personal history.

Morgan then invites group members to find examples of the theme in the nature around them, and to consider the theme in relation to their own lives. "Nature is a very good teacher," she says. "Just engage all your senses and pay attention."

Wandering through the park, writers may notice such things as a fragile cicada exoskeleton or slimy green algae. Their ears may tune in to songbirds chatting, the creek gurgling, or a black walnut thumping as it falls to the ground. Baine describes the 1,000-acre park as "the most peaceful, freeing, calming, beautiful place." She says it is "a haven out of traffic and shopping and rushing and noise."

"Being outside in nature grounds me," says participant Barbara Thompson, a biologist and retired leadership trainer. She says it allows her creativity the space to wander and be inspired.

An important feature of this workshop is that Morgan encourages participants to spend the time however it would benefit them most. The workshop is not a writing competition,

and no one is expected to be Rachel Carson, Henry David Thoreau, or Emily Dickinson.

"We can write — anything we want — draw, sit, and look. We can go back to the group and read what we've written or just talk about what we saw, or not," Baine says.

Morgan encourages everyone to have fun. "Writing can be playful," she says, "and it can be cathartic, pure joy."

After the group assembles again, participants may choose to share what they have written or thought about. "Nancy always has thought-provoking prompts that take our discussions to meaningful places," says Kelly Geurts, a retired K-12 teacher with a passion for nature and the arts. "I have learned so much from everyone and value the depth of our conversations."

When the group explores their perceptions and personal experiences, new connections can spark between strangers.

"Each person brings their diverse life experiences that help me see the writing prompt in rich new ways," says Thompson.

"I find the rhythms and beauty of the natural world to be very inspiring," Geurts says. "Each month I walk away energized and thankful."

*The Writing in Nature workshop takes place at 11 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month. Register via the calendar at <https://loudounwildlife.org/events/>.*

**Geena Riverstone** is a professional writer and editor and a Loudoun Wildlife volunteer.





## Christmas Count Never Disappoints

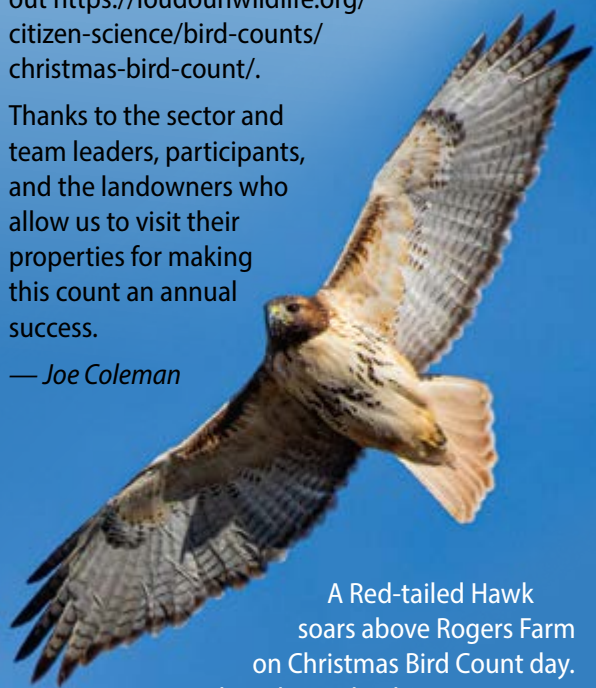
On a beautiful December 28, over 165 people found 48,911 birds of 94 species during Loudoun Wildlife's 27<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count. Both the number of participants and the number of individual birds were a record for this count. Notable sightings included:

- The count's first Laughing Gull, at the Loudoun County Landfill.
- The count's first Marsh Wren, at the Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project.
- Two Peregrine Falcons at Luck Stone Quarry.
- Two Palm Warblers at Digges Valley Farm.
- 80 Bald Eagles! Seven were seen at the same time at the landfill.
- 67 Common Ravens.
- At Beaverdam Reservoir, 792 Ring-necked Ducks, 461 Common Mergansers, and 31 American Coots, all records for this count.

To see our totals and how they compare to previous years, check out <https://loudounwildlife.org/citizen-science/bird-counts/christmas-bird-count/>.

Thanks to the sector and team leaders, participants, and the landowners who allow us to visit their properties for making this count an annual success.

— Joe Coleman



A Red-tailed Hawk  
soars above Rogers Farm  
on Christmas Bird Count day.  
Photo by Michael Sciortino

## Volunteer of the Quarter: Patrick Lewis

by Kim Strader, Volunteer Coordinator

Author Stephen Covey believes that "Effective people are not problem-minded; they're opportunity-minded." This quote brings to mind our new volunteer, Patrick Lewis, who created the Loudoun Wildlife [Young Birding Program](#) that held its first walk in December.



Patrick began birding at age 11 after noticing the diversity of birds he saw in the woods behind his house and at Algonkian Regional Park. Captivated by hawks, winter ducks, and spring migrants, Patrick continued watching birds throughout his youth and now into young adulthood. At only 19 years old, he has authored articles in *The Raven*, a publication of the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO) that focuses on research and significant sightings of Virginia birds. Patrick also advocates for birds through appeals to local and state government officials.

Noticing there were very few fellow young birders, Patrick saw an opportunity to begin working on initiatives to encourage young birding enthusiasts at the state and local levels through VSO. Patrick also established a monthly census of birds at Algonkian Regional Park, where he came to the attention of Loudoun Wildlife's birder extraordinaire, Joe Coleman. Last July, Patrick proposed a Young Birding Program to Joe, who found Patrick's "enthusiasm and love of birds" a great combination for beginning a new birding program through Loudoun Wildlife specifically for youth.

Working with Patrick and Joe, in December Loudoun Wildlife unveiled its Young Birding Program, which provides field trips, workshops, and lectures to introduce participants ages 13-20 to birding, help them grow as birders, and educate them about conservation. All events will be led by experienced young birders and mentoring adults. "He is thrilled that [Loudoun Wildlife] responded very positively and that it has been implemented so quickly," said Patrick's mother, Jody.

Rather than seeing the need for more young people to become involved in birding as a problem, Patrick saw it as an opportunity to create a program. We are grateful for Patrick's inspiring leadership and service with Loudoun Wildlife to create and establish the program, and to our current birding team for their enthusiastic and welcoming assistance. We look forward to many years of engaging, inspiring, and motivating young birders.

Visit <https://loudounwildlife.org/citizen-science/bird-counts/young-birding-program/> to learn more about our new Young Birding Program!





# Programs and Field Trips

Unless otherwise specified, contact [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org) with questions.

## Birding Banshee



Whether you're a beginning birder or an expert, you'll be dazzled by the many bird species you'll find at the **Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve** south of Leesburg. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Friends of Banshee Reeks for the monthly bird walk at this birding hotspot. Bring binoculars if you have them. **Registration required.** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).

**Second Saturdays:**  
February 10, March 9, April 13, 8:00 am

## Birding Bles



Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is pleased to offer a regular bird walk at **Bles Park**, located along the Potomac in eastern Loudoun. At least 200 different species of birds have been observed here in a great mix of habitat. Everyone is welcome, whether you are an experienced or beginning birder. Bring binoculars if you have them. **Registration required.** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Bryan Henson at [bhenson@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:bhenson@loudounwildlife.org).

**Third Sundays:**  
February 18, March 17, April 21\*, 8:00 am



## Birding Sweet Run

**Sweet Run State Park**, previously known as the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, has 894 acres of diverse habitat consisting of vernal pools, meadows, ponds, streams, and a rich oak-hickory forest in northwestern Loudoun. It borders the Appalachian Trail and is only a couple of miles from the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Sweet Run is a wonderful sanctuary for Loudoun wildlife, with numerous bird species utilizing its richness. These walks are sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy; bring binoculars if you have them. Sweet Run State Park is located just north of Neersville at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte 671); directions at [www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/sweet-run](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/sweet-run). **Registration required.** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Joe Coleman at [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).

**Fourth Saturdays:**  
February 24, March 23, April 27\*, 8:00 am

**\* A Celebrate Birds! event**

**Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Board Meeting** — The Board typically meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. All Loudoun Wildlife members are welcome. Contact Jim McWalters at [jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jmcwalters@loudounwildlife.org) for additional information.

**Writing in Nature** — **First Thursdays: February 1, March 7, April 4, May 2, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Gate House at Morven Park.**

Join Nancy Morgan, Director Emeritus, Georgetown Lombardi Arts and Humanities Program, for this monthly opportunity, presented by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, to enjoy the combined health benefits of time spent in nature and writing thoughts and feelings. Writing is often considered a solo, reflective practice, but writing in the company of others can be a supportive, community-building activity that encourages regular practice. Each session is a stand-alone event — come when you are able. Registration for each session is open through the morning of the workshop. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Searching for Birds of Prey** — **Class: Thursday, February 1, 7:00 pm, Rust Library; Field Trip: Saturday, February 3, 1:30 pm until dusk.**

Birds of prey numbers increase dramatically each winter in the county as our resident birds are joined by many others. Learn about the habits of these birds and the local places to find them with raptor expert Liam McGranaghan. The presentation is sponsored by the Loudoun County Public Library and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. On February 3, Loudoun Wildlife will host a field trip where the group will search for winter raptors as we drive the county's back roads with frequent stops to find and identify the many hawks, hopefully an owl or two, and other birds that winter here. Join for one or both events. **Class: Open to all; Field trip: Limit 16. Registration required for the field trip:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Waterfowl Field Trip** — **Saturday, February 10, 10:00 am – 12:30 pm.**

Winter brings a good variety of waterfowl to Loudoun, and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is offering a field trip to find these attractive creatures. We will visit a couple of local hotspots where we should find many of the species that regularly visit the county. Locations and meeting place will be determined a few days in advance of the trip and emailed to registered participants. **Limit 16. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Winter Walk** — **Sunday, February 11, 10:00 am, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary.**

Join naturalist Jake van Schilfgaarde on this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy winter walk to discover and discuss how animals and plants adapt to the coldest months of the year. This will be a relatively easy, but wet, walk during which we will examine the trees, plants, animal signs, and insects we find along the trails. We will enjoy a beautiful time out of doors in this unspoiled setting; participants should have sturdy, water-resistant footwear and dress for the weather. Family-friendly. **Limit 12. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). Please note: Due to the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, JK Black Oak is not open for general public access.





**Introduction to Bluebird Monitoring — Sunday, February 11, 1:00 pm, Virtual.** Learn or review the basics for monitoring Eastern Bluebird nestboxes — habitat, nest building, egg laying and hatching timetables, and aging. Other cavity nesters, and their predators, will also be discussed, as well as measures to keep fledglings safe. Data from recent years will be reviewed, and an overview of the 50-plus trails that are monitored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy volunteers will be given. The information shared in this program is necessary for anyone interested in volunteering as a Bluebird Monitor for the 2024 season. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online.](#)

**Birdhouses and Barrels of Loudoun Online Auction — Thursday, February 15, 12:00 pm, through Thursday, February 22, 10:00 pm.** Up for auction at our popular 2024 online art auction to benefit Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy are beautiful and unique functional as well as artistic birdhouses, rain barrels, and planters decorated by local artists, and experience packages. Watch our social media for a preview of the 2024 birdhouses. Learn more and see photos at <http://auctria.events/2024LWCBirdhouses>.

**Young Birders Walk at Algonkian — Saturday, February 17, 9:00 am, Algonkian Regional Park.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a bird walk offered by our new [Young Birding Program](#). We'll spend time at this birding hotspot, one of Loudoun's best, searching for wintering birds, year-round residents, and waterfowl. This is also a great opportunity to discover what birding is like, sharpen your skills, and meet other young birders! Bring binoculars if you have them (we'll have a couple of loaners). We'll meet in the parking lot near the boat ramp. Note: This walk, approximately 90 minutes, is exclusively for young birders (ages 13–20); parent(s)/guardian(s) welcome. **Limit 16. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online.](#) **Questions:** Contact Patrick Lewis at [plewis@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:plewis@loudounwildlife.org).

**Birding Algonkian — Saturday, February 17, 9:00 am, Algonkian Regional Park.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on a search for birds at this large popular park in eastern Loudoun with extensive frontage along the Potomac River. Its rich bottomland forests, extensive wetlands, and grassy areas are home to numerous species of birds. We'll comb the park searching for winter visitors, residents, and waterfowl. Bring binoculars if you have them. We'll meet in the parking lot near the boat ramp. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online.](#)

**Wildflowers: Planting a Woodland Edge — Thursday, February 22, 7:00 pm, Virtual.** Matt Bright, executive director at Earth Sangha, will discuss the importance of woodland edge habitats and the diversity of wildflowers that make their home here. Woodland edges and the transition zone from forest to meadow offer crucial wildlife habitat and can be home to a wide array of wildflowers, grasses, sedges, and rushes as well as shrubs and small trees. These edges are crucial native plant conservation targets, and Matt will discuss how we can best protect those habitats on public lands and how we can manage our own property and gardens to create similar habitat using locally native plants. This program is co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Loudoun County Public Library. **Registration requested:** [Sign Up Online.](#)

**Nature Playtime — Saturday, February 24, 10:00 – 11:30 am, Gate House at Morven Park.** Come join Loudoun Wildlife for Nature Playtime at the Gate House. We will do a fun, winter-themed craft, read some books, and, of course, have plenty of time to explore outside. Feel free to bring a snack. While all are welcome, activities will target preschool to early elementary-aged children. **Directions:** <https://loudounwildlife.org/2019/01/directions-to-the-gatehouse/>. **Limit 15 children. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online.](#)

**Book Club Meeting — Tuesday, February 27, 7:00 pm, Birch Tree Bookstore, Leesburg.** Join our partners Watermark Woods, Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL), and Birch Tree Bookstore for the Read! Plant! Grow! Book Club that focuses on native plants, sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and LCPL. At this meeting we'll discuss the book *The Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl. You may borrow the book through LCPL (contact Allison Forbes at [Allison.Forbes@loudoun.gov](mailto:Allison.Forbes@loudoun.gov) for a copy) or purchase it at Birch Tree. Attend online or in person. If you attend online, go to the LCPL calendar (<https://library.loudoun.gov/> and click Event Calendar) to get the link to the program.

**Woodcock Walk at Institute Farm — Saturday, March 2, 6:00 pm, Institute Farm near Aldie.** Witness the bizarre courtship displays of the American Woodcock, one of our most fascinating avian residents. On this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy outing, we will listen for the woodcock's "peent" and watch its aerial acrobatics at the historic Institute Farm near Aldie. **Limit 10. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online.](#)

**Vernal Pools — Sunday, March 3, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve education center.** Vernal pools, also known as ephemeral or seasonal pools, are an important yet often overlooked wetland. As the name suggests, they are temporary pools, only holding water for a brief time each year. During that time, they are home to mysterious shrimp, developing dragonfly larvae, and are critical breeding grounds for several of our local salamander and frog species. These vernal pools are in rapid decline due to development. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Jenny Erickson for a look into the wildlife that utilize these pools and what we can all do to help protect these sensitive wetlands. This program is co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, Loudoun County Public Libraries, and Banshee Reeks.

**Young Birding Bird and Amphibian Walk at JK Black Oak — Saturday, March 9, 9:00 am, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Young Birding Program and Amphibian Monitoring Program for a bird and amphibian walk at JK Black Oak. We will explore part of the sanctuary searching for birds, frogs, and other amphibians. Along the way we will give bird and amphibian identification tips and fun facts about JK Black Oak's vernal pools and wildlife. This is a great way to up your game, meet other young people interested in wildlife, and explore JK Black Oak. The sanctuary is one of Loudoun's premier vernal pool habitats and is normally closed to the public. Bring binoculars if you have them (we'll have a couple of loaners), and wear appropriate shoes for wet, unpaved trails. Note: This walk is exclusively for young people





ages 13–20; a parent/guardian is welcome. Limit 10. Directions and parking information will be provided prior to the walk. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Patrick Lewis at [plewis@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:plewis@loudounwildlife.org). *Note: Due to the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, JK Black Oak is not open for general public access.*

**Build Like a Beaver — Sunday, March 10, 2:00 - 3:00 pm, Rust Library.** First, we'll learn the basics of beaver behavior through interactive story and song. Then we'll explore the difference between a dam and a lodge, learning all about the impressive structures these ecosystem engineers create. Finally, we'll use natural materials to work in groups and build like a beaver! Educational materials on coexisting with beavers (and addressing the problems they can cause) will be available for adults as well. This family-friendly program is co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Loudoun County Public Library.

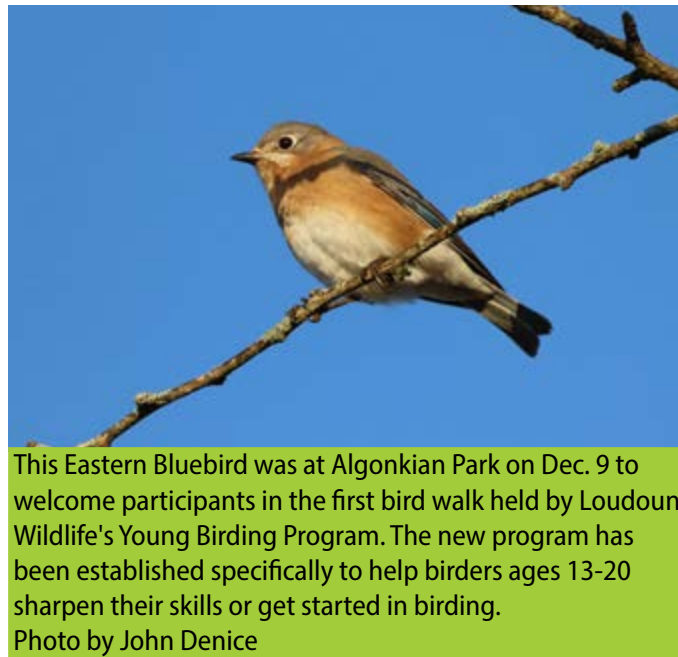
**Woodcock Walk at JK Black Oak — Tuesday, March 12, 6:45 pm, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for an early evening walk on this special property looking for birds; then as dusk settles in, we'll hope to hear the "peent" of American Woodcock and see their incredible courtship display flight. **Limit 10. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). *Note: Due to the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, JK Black Oak is not open for general public access.*

**Nature Playtime — Saturday, March 16, 10:00 – 11:30 am, Gate House at Morven Park.** Come join Loudoun Wildlife for Nature Playtime at the Gate House. We will do a fun, spring-themed craft, read some books, and, of course, have plenty of time to explore outside. See Saturday, February 24, entry for further details and directions. **Limit 15 children. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Give Choose! — Tuesday, March 19.** Give Choose is 24 hours of giving organized by the Community Foundation for Loudoun and Northern Fauquier Counties to benefit local charities serving our community. The goal is to inspire our community to come together to give generously to charities that make our community the best place to grow up and grow old. With a donation as little as \$10, you can support wildlife habitat and help make Loudoun a place where people and wildlife thrive together. To learn more and to support Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on this day, please donate here: <https://www.givechoose.org/nonprofits/LoudounWildlifeConservancy>. (Early giving begins March 5 and the donation link in the profile will appear then.)

**Woodcock Walk at Broad Run Stream Valley Park — Tuesday, March 19, 6:45 pm.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for an early evening walk on this special property looking for birds; then as dusk settles in, we'll hope to hear the "peent" of American Woodcock and see their incredible courtship display flight. **Limit 10. Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Young Birding Online Presentation: Spring Migrants ID — Wednesday, March 20, 7:00 pm, Virtual.** Many birders would choose spring migration as their favorite time of year to bird, but it can also be one of the most confusing seasons. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's new [Young Birding Program](#) for this virtual evening presentation that will go over the basics of identifying and finding warblers and other spring migrants! We'll have time for questions after the talk. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Patrick Lewis at [plewis@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:plewis@loudounwildlife.org).



This Eastern Bluebird was at Algonkian Park on Dec. 9 to welcome participants in the first bird walk held by Loudoun Wildlife's Young Birding Program. The new program has been established specifically to help birders ages 13-20 sharpen their skills or get started in birding.  
Photo by John Denice

**Native Plants of the Mid-Atlantic: Medicinal and Food Applications — Thursday, March 21, 7:00 pm, Virtual.** Native plants provide valuable shelter and food for much of our local wildlife. These plants also have exciting applications in the treatments of many physical and mental ailments. In this Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy program, presented by Jerry Underhill, a practicing member of the American Herbalist Guild, we will examine the historical and traditional applications of plant-based medicines and the chemical compounds that support those uses. This program will stretch our horizons to learn more about and increase our appreciation for our native plants. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Creek Critters of Loudoun, South Fork of the Catoctin — Sunday, March 24, 1:00 pm.** Join the Purcellville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Purcellville Tree and Environment Sustainability Committee, and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to get up close and personal with the creek critters living in the South Fork of the Catoctin Creek at the Chapman DeMary Trail. Loudoun Wildlife Stream Team members will discuss the natural history of these critters, help participants learn how to identify them, and explain how they can help us determine the health of a stream. **Registration required** through Purcellville Parks and Recreation at <https://www.purcellvilleva.gov>. **Questions:** Contact [aulland@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:aulland@loudounwildlife.org).

**Winged Mammals: Exploring the Fascinating World of Bats — Sunday, March 24, 2:00 – 3:30 pm, Rust Library, Leesburg.** Often regarded as nature's elusive aerial acrobats, bats constitute a diverse and fascinating group of mammals with unique adaptations that have allowed them to thrive across various ecosystems worldwide.



Despite their association with darkness and the night, bats play a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance. Their diverse diets — ranging from nectar, fruit, and insects to even blood in the case of vampire bats — make them essential for pollination, seed dispersal, and insect population control, thereby contributing significantly to the health of ecosystems. This program is co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Loudoun County Public Library.

**Spring Wildflowers at Ball's Bluff — Saturdays, April 6 and 13, 8:00 am, Ball's Bluff Regional Park.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for one (not both!) of these field trips 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. Bring binoculars if you have them. *Limit 15; sign up early for this popular event. Registration required: [Sign Up Online](#).*

**JK Black Oak Workday — Saturday, April 6, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy volunteers for habitat restoration projects that include invasive plant removal and trail maintenance. Additional information and directions to the site will be provided before the event. Twenty volunteers are needed and must be at least 16 years old to participate. Please be aware that you may encounter poison ivy and ticks at the work site. Long sleeves and pants, gloves, and insect repellent are recommended. *Note: Due to the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, JK Black Oak is not open for general public access, and we can only accommodate confirmed volunteers for this event. Registration required: [Sign Up Online](#). Questions: Contact Volunteer Coordinator Kim Strader at [kstrader@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:kstrader@loudounwildlife.org).*

**Spring Native Plant Sale — Saturday, April 13, 9:00 am – 3:00pm, Morven Park, main parking lot.** Native plants add beauty and interest to your garden year-round and provide habitat for wildlife. Spring-blooming flowers, vines, trees, shrubs, and ferns will be available from four local native plant nurseries: Hill House Farm & Nursery, Nature By Design, Seven Bends Nursery, and Watermark Woods. Volunteers knowledgeable about native plants will be on hand to advise you about selecting natives for your garden. The sale also provides an opportunity to learn about some of Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's programs and how you can volunteer for them. For more information and updates, visit the event page on our website. *Questions: Contact [nativeplantsale@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:nativeplantsale@loudounwildlife.org).*

**Creek Critters of Loudoun, Lovettsville Community Park — Sunday, April 14, 2:00 – 3:30 pm.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to get up close and personal with the creek critters living in the stream at Lovettsville Community Park. Loudoun Wildlife Stream Team members will discuss the natural history of these critters, help participants learn how to identify them, and explain how they can help us determine the health of a stream. *Free event, but registration required at [loudoun.gov/PRCSconnect](http://loudoun.gov/PRCSconnect) starting in mid-February. Questions: Contact [aulland@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:aulland@loudounwildlife.org).*

**Annual Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival — Saturday, April 20, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm, and Sunday, April 21, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, downtown Leesburg.** The annual Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival is a great way to kick off your spring activities! Visit Loudoun

Wildlife Conservancy's 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. *For more information on the event, visit <https://www.leesburgva.gov/departments/parks-recreation/events/flower-garden-festival>.*

**Nature Playtime — Saturday, April 20, 10:00 – 11:30 am, Gate House at Morven Park.** Come join Loudoun Wildlife for Nature Playtime at the Gate House. We will do a fun, spring-themed craft, read some books, and, of course, have plenty of time to explore in the creek if the weather permits. See Saturday, February 24, entry for further details and directions. Note: Playing in a creek can be messy business! You may want to bring a towel and change of clothes. *Limit 15 children. Registration required: [Sign Up Online](#).*

**Celebrate Birds! Events and Birdathon — Saturday, April 20 – Sunday, May 19.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy in celebrating bird migration, one of our planet's greatest wonders! From mid-April through early June, millions of birds journey north from their wintering grounds. Some of these birds will stay and nest in our area, but many will only stay long enough to feed and replenish their strength before heading further north. As a result, it is possible to observe well over 100 species of birds in a single day. To celebrate this phenomenon, Loudoun Wildlife invites you to join one of our bird walks at hotspots throughout the county. We also invite you to either sponsor one of our teams or participate in our **Birdathon**, Loudoun Wildlife's largest fundraiser, sometime between April 20 and May 19 – the peak of migration in our area. How many species will our intrepid birders find? Would you like to join them? Support your favorite team or form your own team by signing up online. *Registration required for all walks; [Sign Up Online](#). Questions: Contact Joe Coleman at [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org). Stay tuned for more Celebrate Bird walks in May.*

**Celebrate Birds! Walk at Broad Run Stream Valley Park — Saturday, April 20, 8:00 am.** Join our leaders in search of birds at this surprisingly rich park along Broad Run. Its varied habitat (including a rich floodplain on both sides of the stream, edge and meadow habitat, and multiple ponds) should provide the group with a good variety of migrating birds from shorebirds to warblers, as well as residents. Parking information will be emailed to registered participants. *Limit 14. Registration required: [Sign Up Online](#).*

**Celebrate Birds! Walk at Bles Park — Sunday, April 21, 8:00 am.** So far, 200 different species of birds have been observed at Bles Park in a great mix of habitat along the Potomac in eastern Loudoun. Many sensitive wetland birds are commonly found this time of year along with early migrating species. *Registration required: [Sign Up Online](#). Questions: Contact Bryan Henson at [bhenson@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:bhenson@loudounwildlife.org).*

**Dulles Greenway Eagle Cam: Window into the Life of Eagles — Tuesday, April 23, 7:00 pm, location TBD.** Join us to learn about the creation of the beautiful Dulles Greenway Wetlands in the mid-1990s and the discovery of the eagle's nest around 10 years later. Cameras installed on the nest three years ago have given us a peek into the private lives of these magnificent birds of prey. We'll share photos





and videos of the milestones from each season, from egg laying to fledging. We'll talk about the nest collapse last season, the rescue and release of the fallen eaglets, the rebuilding of the nest, and the return of the eagles. Join us to find out what the 2024 nesting season may bring! This program is co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and the Loudoun County Public Library.

**Loudoun Student Environmental Action Showcase (SEAS) — Wednesday, April 24, 5:00 – 8:00 pm, Academies of Loudoun.**

Find new ways to connect with nature and support environmental stewardship in Loudoun. Students in grades K–12 share their artwork and efforts to reduce waste, conserve energy, improve water quality, protect habitat, and solve eco-challenges. Community groups offer hands-on activities, resources, and volunteer opportunities. Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is co-hosting this showcase along with Loudoun County Public Schools, the Loudoun Environmental Education Alliance, and Northwest Virginia Regional GREENetwork. Learn more at [loudounnature.org](http://loudounnature.org).

**Celebrate Birds! Walk at Sweet Run — Saturday, April 27, 8:00 am, Sweet Run State Park.** Sweet Run State Park, previously known as the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, has 894 acres of diverse habitat. It borders the Appalachian Trail and is only a couple of miles from the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Directions: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/sweet-run>. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Joe Coleman at [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).

**Young Birders Walk at Bles — Saturday, April 27, 8:00 am, Bles Park.** With spring migration taking off, late April is a great time to join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's [Young Birding Program](#) at Bles Park in eastern Loudoun County. We'll comb the variety of habitats that include wooded areas, fields, and a rare wetland for both year-round residents and exciting migrants! Whether you've never birded before, are looking to sharpen your skills, or just want to spend time in the field with other young birders, this walk is for you. We'll meet in the main parking lot. Bring binoculars if you have them (we'll have a couple of loaners). *Note: This walk, approximately 90 minutes, is exclusively for young birders (ages 13–20); parent(s)/guardian(s) welcome. Limit 16.* **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Patrick Lewis at [plewis@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:plewis@loudounwildlife.org).

**Dark Skies: Lights Out for Migratory Birds — Wednesday, May 1, 7:00 pm, Broadlands Community Center.** Did you know that most birds migrate at night? During spring migration, birds migrating at night are dependent on dark skies to keep their course as they return to northern nesting grounds. Artificial light at night disorients migrating birds and can lead to devastating effects on flocks. Lights Out campaigns reduce the amount of artificial nighttime light and can help protect migratory birds. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy at this education event with guest speakers from partner organizations such as Dark Sky Friends and The Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, who will share expertise on the importance of dark skies for bird migration, as well as what Lights Out really means. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#).

**Run the Greenway — Saturday, May 4.** We're excited to again participate in the Dulles Greenway's Run the Greenway race. This event offers a unique opportunity for runners to raise money for Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and give back to Loudoun! Participants can choose between a 5k, 10k, Kids Fun Run, or virtual race. You can sign up as an individual or part of a team, and raise funds for Loudoun Wildlife — 100 percent of the funds raised on our behalf will come directly to us. Sign up here: <https://www.dullesgreenway.com/run-the-greenway/>. The cars are making way for runners, joggers, and walkers of all ages! Get ready to make a difference this year at Run the Greenway and see the toll road as you've never seen it before.

**JK Black Oak Workday — Saturday, May 11, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary.** See Saturday, April 6, entry for details, but note the time difference. **Registration required:** [Sign Up Online](#). **Questions:** Contact Volunteer Coordinator Kim Strader at [kstrader@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:kstrader@loudounwildlife.org).

*Dates and locations are subject to change. For up-to-date information on our programs or to register, visit our website at [www.loudounwildlife.org](http://www.loudounwildlife.org) or contact [info@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:info@loudounwildlife.org).*

## The Birdathon is coming!

April 20 - May 19



Photo by Eric Anderson

Find (or form) your team! Mark your calendar!

Find more about our Birdathon and other Celebrate Birds! events at: <https://loudounwildlife.org/citizen-science/bird-counts/celebratebirds-birdathon/>



*People and Wildlife  
Thrive Together*

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

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## Birdhouses & Barrels



**February 15 - 22**

**Loudoun Wildlife's annual online auction, featuring:**

- \* Experiences
- \* Planters
- \* Birdhouses
- \* Rain barrels

**View offerings and register to bid at:**  
**<https://auctria.events/2024LWCBirdhouses>**

Photo by Julie Borneman