Habitat Herald

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A Wild Open House for a Globally Rare Jewel

Visitors explore a woodland path during JK Black Oak's open house. Photo by Tom Kercheval

by Tom Kercheval, Executive Director

When Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy purchased the 89-acre JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary in 2020, our goal was to make the property a centralized showcase of our mission: to protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat. Over the last six years, that's exactly what we've done, and the opportunity to share the breadth of our work with the public at our third JK Black Oak Open House on September 27 was one we embraced with pride.

Registration for the open house reached an all-time high, with more than 300 people signing up to get a firsthand look at the property the Virginia Department of Conservation's Natural Heritage Program designated as a "globally rare wetland community" thanks to its vernal pools, mature forest, unique geologic setting, rare amphibians, and other special characteristics.

The edge of a nor'easter did its best to dampen attendance with periods of light rain and a few ferocious wind gusts. Still, nearly 200 community members of all ages braved the elements to experience for themselves the beauty of what's been called a "jewel of Loudoun County."

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Executive Director's Message

Dear Loudoun Wildlife family,



My earliest impressions of fall remain strikingly vivid: the multi-hued leaves majestically swirling as they drift toward the cool earth, the fresh crispness of the autumn air, the flocks of migrating birds bidding fond farewells as they sojourn south. Yes, those images are all admittedly cliches we're likely more than used to when we think of the season, but why should we ever allow ourselves to become "used to" such inspiring natural beauty? Watching summer transform into fall with fresh eyes each year, no matter how many times we've seen it before, is a life-affirming choice that's always within our power to make, and Loudoun Wildlife offers so many opportunities to make that choice easy.

Our "Walk for Wildlife" event happening throughout October is one powerful example, inspiring adults and young people alike to get up and go outside with family and friends as part of a nature-based competition to see who can identify the most species, visit the most wild places, and walk the most miles along the way. It's one of those competitions where the winners get the least valuable prizes, as the simple act of exploration mixed with the thrill of wild discoveries does wonders for serotonin levels. (Walk for Wildlife is again presented this year by Abernethy & Spencer Greenhouse and Garden Center, and you can still register throughout October if you haven't signed up yet.)

Our bird walks, nature walks, and fall color walks offer inspirational opportunities to add something new to your repertoire of favorite fall memories. Our Salt Watch program kicks off another difference-making season, and our popular Writing in Nature program provides some focused time to slow down and let nature be your creative muse. Our JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary will also be humming with activity this fall, including volunteer workdays and something brand new to the Sanctuary over the last year: school field trips. Loudoun County Public School students will again be visiting JK Black Oak to explore its rare vernal pools, unique wildlife, and stunning meadows and forests. As they do, they'll be participating in nature-journaling activities aligned with our Peterson Young Naturalist Program, which trains LCPS teachers to incorporate outdoor learning into their curriculum. There's a great sense of pride among the organization knowing these activities will be helping young people develop their own vivid impressions of this transformative fall season.

Whether it takes the form of volunteering, donating, joining as a member, simply spreading the word, or all of the above, your ongoing support makes all of this and so much more possible. Thanks for making this beautiful season that much more impactful. The leaves may be changing, but our gratitude remains evergreen.



Tom

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Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. We protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat, shaping a Loudoun where people and wildlife thrive together. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Conservation Advocacy:

Lucketts Bypass Construction on Wildlife Sanctuary Appears Unavoidable

by Trinity Mills, Conservation Advocacy Coordinator

The county released updated plans for a new Lucketts Bypass alternative dubbed the "mini" bypass. This smaller-scale roadway would have two lanes and slower speeds than the original plan, according to the county. However, the right of way would traverse Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary. Our strong preference has always been to protect the sanctuary by locating any Route 15 bypass on the eastern side of Route 15, away from the property entirely. That no longer appears to be an option the county is pursuing.

Given the real need for congestion and safety relief in the Lucketts area, Loudoun Wildlife is willing to be a good community partner and explore the mini bypass option, placed as far east on the sanctuary as possible. This is a major compromise for us: even at the eastern edge, the bypass would bring noise, light, and water impacts across the sanctuary — and a project that would have restored 15 acres of the sanctuary into new wetlands would no longer be able to move forward. Even with proper protections in place, this mini bypass project would still cause real harm to JK Black Oak's globally rare wetlands and critical habitat for threatened and endangered species. Without those protections, the potential for destruction and degradation is far greater. Our vision is a Loudoun where people and wildlife thrive together, and we are committed to pursuing a solution that supports that vision by minimizing the impact to JK Black Oak as much as we can through input to and collaboration with the county.

Paris Mountain Resort



An application has been submitted for a proposed resort on Paris Mountain. This potential new hotel complex is looking to span 146 acres of steep slopes across three counties, with the building envelope entirely in the farthest southwest corner of Loudoun. We've been working with a coalition of other organizations to oppose this project.

This summer, Loudoun Wildlife deployed ultrasonic monitors to investigate the potential presence of rare bat populations in proximity to the property. Our monitoring on a property adjacent to the parcel containing the proposed building envelope recorded the highest concentration of state-endangered Little Brown Bats of any monitoring site in Loudoun County.

Data Centers



October was a busy month for data center reform! The county hosted open houses at the end of September to give the public information about the recently released draft text for Phase 2 of the Data Center Standards and Locations Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments. Most notable in these presentations was what was missing from considerations: namely standards for vibrations and water usage.

Two other pieces of data center policy were before the Board of Supervisors (BoS) in October. First was the reconsideration of the 2025 grandfathering clause that allowed for 17 active data center applications to continue to be processed administratively without a hearing or vote. Supervisors Laura TeKrony and Juli Briskman asked for the rescission of this policy to force the large applications through the legislative process to allow greater scrutiny from the BoS and the public, but the rollback effort failed.

On October 17, our partners in the Data Center Reform Coalition, the Piedmont Environmental Council, and Chesapeake Climate Action Network, held the Leesburg March for a Moratorium. This was a local event in a statewide series happening throughout the month as a way to gear up for a unified ask to the General Assembly in the upcoming session: a statewide data center moratorium.

Stand Up for Habitat!

Learn more about how you can advocate for Loudoun's wildlife and wild spaces:

https://loudounwildlife.org/conservation-advocacy/

Finally, on October 20, the Loudoun BoS took a final vote to confirm the enactment of a local data center pause. This followed a resolution of consideration during the September 15 BoS meeting that proposed to halt the approval of new data centers for one year, the longest period allowable by state law, for the purpose of completing the Data Center Standards and Locations zoning updates.

Western Loudoun Rural Uses and Standards



The ad hoc committee made up of Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance Committee members and Planning Commission representatives had their meeting regarding the Mountainside Overlay District (MOD) topic as part of the initiation of draft text changes for amendments to the county's Western Loudoun Rural Uses and Standards Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. Unfortunately, minimal additional environmental protections were included in the recommendations, with a standardized 100-foot setback for spring features (in comparison to the 300-foot setback in certain MOD steep slope areas) and some additional small-scale building allowances that were not previously permitted. A recommendation was made for a minimum tree cover retention of 50% for nonresidential commercial use development. The county will be continuing to investigate the potential future requirement of a minor special exception application requirement for all future "nonresidential covered activities in the Somewhat Sensitive and Sensitive areas of the [MOD]." The ad hoc committee's recommendations will go to a Planning Commission work session, where there will be further opportunity for public comment.

A Wild Open House continued from page 1

Four of the sanctuary's trails were open for self-guided tours, with roaming guides on hand to answer questions and point out areas of special interest. Two morning nature walks were filled beyond capacity. JK Black Oak volunteers Gerco Hoogeweg and Sheila Ferguson led the walks, sharing information on the more than 1,000 species of plants and animals that call the sanctuary home, the ongoing restoration work conducted by our amazing volunteers, and the rare vernal pools that support a remarkable variety of wildlife.

Visitors also stopped by Loudoun Wildlife's information table to learn about our programs and volunteer opportunities. So much of our work throughout the county is reflected at the sanctuary, including stream monitoring, amphibian and reptile monitoring, bluebird monitoring, bird counts, habitat restoration, and even environmental education.

Loudoun Wildlife Director of Education Tracey Baroody was on hand to talk about our growing Peterson Young Naturalist Program, a partnership with Loudoun County Public Schools that trains teachers to incorporate nature-based learning into their curriculum. As part of the Peterson program, we held our first school field trips at JK Black Oak this year, welcoming kindergarten and high school students to explore the property, conduct nature journaling, take a break from their screens, and connect with the natural world around them. More field trips are planned for this fall.

Our advocacy table was busy, too, with Conservation Advocacy Coordinator Trinity Mills and Board President Amy Ulland sharing the latest information on the proposed Lucketts Bypass and its potential impact on the sanctuary. We were heartened by the many visitors who stopped by to express their support for the property and ask how they could help.

Our friends at the Lucketts Ruritans were instrumental in making the sanctuary's purchase possible, so it was only fitting that they had a presence at the Open House, too. After all, this is a "house" they helped build and protect, and we're grateful for their ongoing support.

Even "Batman" showed up!

Okay, it wasn't the superhero you may be familiar with, but this "bat man" is certainly a hero to us: Bruce Kimmel, president of the Virginia Master Naturalists Banshee Reeks Chapter. Bruce shared results from his ongoing bat monitoring work on the property, including exciting eDNA evidence confirming the presence of the federally endangered Northern Long-eared Bat at the sanctuary.



Visitors follow a path through a meadow of goldenrod in full autumn bloom. Photo by Tom Kercheval



Volunteers familiar with the sanctuary's story — including its landscape, wildlife, and Loudoun Wildlife's continuing restoration efforts — lead tours on open house day. Photo by Tom Kercheval



Some paths take visitors past installations of native trees and other plants, protected by fencing from JK Black Oak's deer population. Photo by Tom Kercheval

"The Northern Long-eared Bat comes here almost every day and utilizes the vernal pools for food and water," Bruce says. "If this place wasn't here, it's not certain those bats would survive, and there are so few of them left."

Bruce says protecting places like JK Black Oak ultimately benefits people, too. "I hear a lot of people say, 'We've got to put people first,' but one of the important things to understand is that when we abuse the land, we wind up abusing ourselves. We need a space like this so we can maintain the diversity of wildlife and species that are necessary for a healthy environment around us."

JK Black Oak volunteer Lisa Treichel agrees.

"I think the Open House is really important," Lisa says. "It's good to let the public know what we really have here. It's one of the few places left where you can see some of these rare species — like the Eastern Spadefoot [primordial frog] or Fairy Shrimp — that people rarely get to see in this increasingly urbanized environment."

That opportunity to see, experience, and better understand what makes JK Black Oak so special is exactly why we're opening its doors to the community more frequently and why protecting this remarkable, globally rare property — right here in our home county — remains so important.

Learn more about JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary at https://loudounwildlife.org/black-oak/.

Learn more about the Lucketts Bypass proposal and its potential effects on the sanctuary at https://loudounwildlife.org/2026/10/route-15-lucketts-bypass/ and in our Conservation Advocacy update on page 3 of this issue.



Visitors stop for information at tables staffed by Loudoun Wildlife volunteers and staff members. Photo by Tom Kercheval

Butterfly Count News, Plus a New Reason to Plant Milkweed

by Anne Ellis, Butterfly Count Coordinator


Zabulon Skipper photo by Peter Friedman

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's 30th annual butterfly count was held on August 1. It was a typical summer day: temperature in the low 80s, cloudy, and very humid — not the best conditions for butterflies, but a spot of afternoon sunshine brought them out.

Thanks to the 106 volunteers who defied the heat and humidity to participate in this popular citizen science program, 2,488 butterflies were spotted, including 43 species. Our data for 2026, which is reported to the North American Butterfly Association and made available to researchers, is posted here: https://loudounwildlife.org/2024/08/butterfly-count-data-reports/.

Although the total number of butterflies was down from last year and well below our 10-year average of 3,400, there were some definite highlights:

- A Common Wood Nymph, not seen in our butterfly count since 2020, was noted.
- A whopping 48 Common Checkered Skippers, the most we've ever seen during a count and a lovely little gem, were recorded by several teams.

A spreadsheet showing results for our annual counts from 2017 through 2026 is located here: https://loudounwildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ButterflyCountData2016-2025.pdf

Make Room for (More) Milkweed

There are many factors contributing to declining numbers of insects, but it isn't all doom and gloom. A recent article in *National Geographic*, "The Surprising Secret Weapon

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TrailSnap: How You Can Monitor and Protect Your Trails

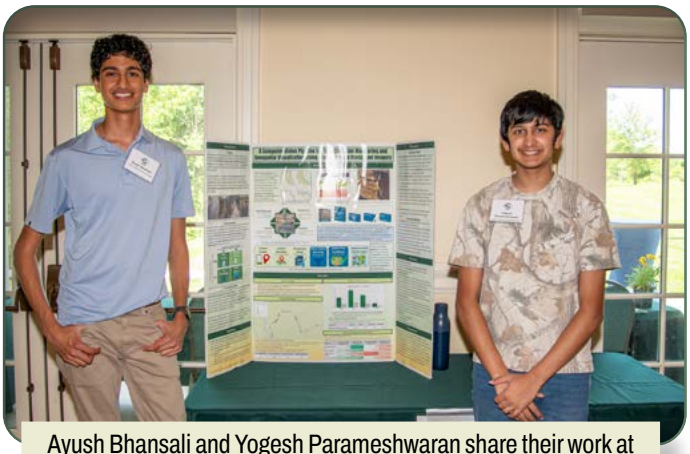
by Ayush Bhansali and Yogesh Parameshwaran

Editor's note: *Once again this year, Loudoun Wildlife recognized students from the Loudoun County Regional Science and Engineering Fair for projects that aligned with our mission. Two of those students were* ***Ayush Bhansali*** *and* ***Yogesh Parameshwaran*** *from Independence High School. Ayush and Yogesh earned our "Great Blue Heron" award thanks to their insightful project focused on trail condition monitoring using crowdsourced geospatial imagery. The duo presented their project at our Annual Meeting in June, and they've now provided this article detailing their work. We're proud of these young environmental scholars and excited to see where their futures lead!*

If you've spent enough time hiking, you've probably come across a section of trail that's muddy or washed out. Many of us walk around it and keep moving, but every one of those moments is also an opportunity to observe the condition of the trail. We began our project with a simple question: What if those everyday observations could actually help managers care for the trails we use?

Trail managers are responsible for a vast network of trails. The U.S. Forest Service alone manages nearly 163,000 miles of trails, with only about 50,000 of those miles receiving maintenance annually. With so much ground to cover, it's impossible for crews to see every small issue as it develops. Meanwhile, hikers are already moving through these trails every day. This is where community science, a method of volunteer data collection, comes into play.

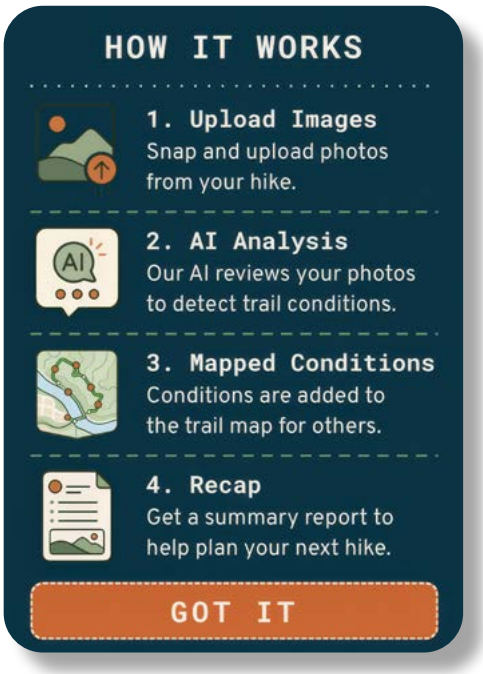
Platforms like iNaturalist have shown how observations made by everyday people can contribute to much larger scientific datasets. However, applying the same idea to trail conditions introduces a challenge: People do not always judge conditions the same way. One hiker might consider a muddy or eroded section severe, while another might see that same section as no problem. Community science can provide the scale and coverage needed to monitor large trail networks, but without a consistent way to evaluate each observation, the resulting data can be difficult to compare and use.



Ayush Bhansali and Yogesh Parameshwaran share their work at Loudoun Wildlife's Annual Meeting. Photo by Sheri Knauer

To combat the growing concerns on trails, we trained a machine-learning model to recognize trail problems, from minor to severe. The model standardized the volunteer data that was collected to indicate four main issues: muddiness, incisions, multiple treadings, and rootedness.

The TrailSnap app



We then built an app called "TrailSnap" (https://www.TrailSnap.org) to make the models easy for anyone to use. Hikers can upload a trail photo from their phone, and the website uses the photo's location and checks the trail photo for signs of damage. Each report then appears on a map, so individual photos can start to show where problems are happening across a trail system. What might normally stay as just another photo on someone's phone can instead become useful information about the condition of a trail.

The approach isn't perfect. The model may be too sensitive in some cases and may miss certain problems, but community science offers benefits beyond data collection. By asking hikers to pay attention to trail issues, TrailSnap can also help people better understand how their own actions affect trails. That awareness can reinforce "leave no trace" principles, such as staying on established paths and avoiding the creation of new side trails while encouraging hikers to see themselves as active stewards of the places they enjoy.

Loudoun Wildlife Welcomes New Development Coordinator

by Alex Reddy



Hello! I'm Alex Reddy, a Loudoun County resident, and I'm delighted to join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy as your new development coordinator. I'm here to help donors, members, and volunteers see the real difference their generosity makes.

In my first few weeks, I've loved getting to know the volunteers, staff, and supporters who make Loudoun Wildlife's work possible, and seeing that work up close. At JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary, I saw why Loudoun Wildlife protects these 89 acres of forest, meadow, and vernal pools near Lucketts so carefully: its globally rare wetlands and rich amphibian life are an irreplaceable part of Loudoun's natural heritage.

At the Fall Native Plant Sale at Morven Park, I watched nursery owners and Loudoun Wildlife volunteers help neighbors bring native plants home. At the "Loudoun's Birds of Prey" presentation at Rust Library, I learned how our resident raptors are joined by many more each fall and winter. And at the Harrison Street Meadow along the W&OD Trail, I met volunteers who have turned a small patch of downtown Leesburg into a thriving pollinator haven.

Every one of these places depends on the generosity of our community. Each gift helps restore native habitat, protect open space, support local wildlife, and connect neighbors of all ages with nature. In one of the country's fastest-growing counties, that support matters more every year. That's why I'm excited to help grow Loudoun Wildlife's development capacity so our fundraising keeps pace with our growing programs.

Working closely with our wonderful team, I'll be welcoming supporters, making sure every donor feels valued and sees the results of their support, keeping donor records accurate, and supporting events and campaigns. I'm also looking forward to growing the ways you can give all year long, from membership to legacy giving.

I bring years of fundraising and donor relations experience with wildlife and conservation nonprofits. I hold a Master of Science degree in biological anthropology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a Bachelor of Arts in anthropology from the University of Oregon, and I've worked professionally in endangered species care.

I'm grateful to be part of a community that works so hard to protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat locally. If you see me at an upcoming event, please say hello. I'd love to hear what brought you to Loudoun Wildlife!



Butterfly Count continued from page 5



Common Wood Nymph photo by Larry Meade

Against Spotted Lanternflies" (https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/article/milkweed-spotted-lanternflies – subscription required), offers new hope in the fight against the nonnative, invasive Spotted Lanternfly (SLF): milkweed!

As part of a study cited in the article, a group of citizen scientists were asked to observe milkweed and record pollinator action. Several volunteers noticed dead SLF nymphs around the plants, inspiring a small experiment by researchers at Michigan State University. They showed that, indeed, SLF nymphs fed on milkweed and many perished. It seems that SLFs don't recognize milkweed as toxic!

These study results have not been published in a peer-reviewed forum, but planting milkweed is a good idea anyway. There are many species of milkweed that are important to pollinators as a source of pollen and nectar. It is the host plant of the beloved Monarch butterfly — and now, it has been shown to kill Spotted Lanternflies! Squashing the insects might be satisfying, but planting milkweed might be even better.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's 31st Annual Butterfly Count will be held on Saturday, August 7, 2027. We hope we can count you in.

Controlling Invasive Plants With Herbicides? Maximize Effectiveness, Minimize Harm

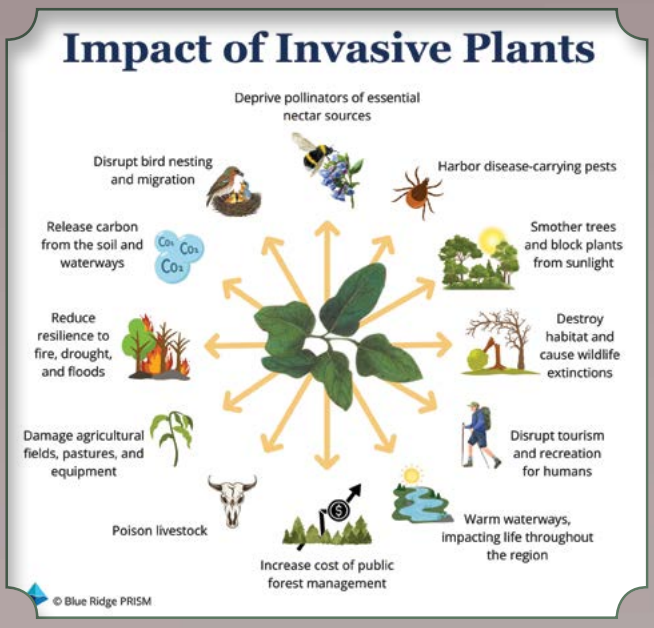
by Blue Ridge PRISM

Invasive plants impact almost everything we hold near and dear. They deprive pollinators of essential nectar sources. They can harbor disease-carrying pests such as blacklegged ticks and mosquitoes. They smother trees, block sunlight from reaching native plants on the forest floor, damage wildlife habitat, and harm our economy.

In short, invasive plants can cause tremendous harm to people, wildlife, and the environment. Controlling them sometimes requires herbicides — but you should always use herbicides responsibly and only when they are the best solution for the problem you're addressing.

Whatever method you choose, keep three must-dos in mind:

- **Make a definite plant ID.** Many apps and resources — including our Virginia Invasive Plant ID and Control Tool, https://blueridgeprism.org/plants, and Invasive Plant Fact Sheets, https://blueridgeprism.org/factsheets — can help you make sure you're treating the right plant.
- **Prioritize safety.** Safety is critical to protect yourself, loved ones, pets, wildlife, and other plants. Some important Personal Protective Equipment is listed at https://blueridgeprism.org/control.



Invasive plants disrupt ecosystem structure and function, endanger local livelihoods and economies, and weaken the capacity of natural systems to adapt to climate change. Blue Ridge PRISM infographic

- **Don't make the situation worse.** For example, broadcast-spraying a roadside slope can kill all the vegetation, expose the soil to erosion, and create new opportunities for invasive plants to establish.

What Are Herbicides?



The hack-and-squirt technique lets crews apply very small quantities of herbicide to targeted locations. Blue Ridge PRISM photo

Herbicides are a type of pesticide designed to kill plants. There are many different kinds. Understanding a few basic differences can help reduce unnecessary use.

- **Systemic herbicides** are usually your best choice to treat invasive plants, because they are absorbed by the plant and move through it into the roots, killing the entire plant.
- **Contact herbicides** kill the plant tissue they touch but may leave the root system alive.
- **Post-emergent herbicides** are applied after plants have emerged and are actively growing.
- **Pre-emergent herbicides** only prevent seeds from germinating.

As members of the public, you can purchase and use **non-restricted herbicides** without a pesticide applicator license. Whenever possible, also choose formulations that are safe to use around water.

Every herbicide has a label explaining how and where it can be used, required safety precautions, and what to do in case of exposure. ***The label is the law: Always read and follow it.***

Why Consider Herbicides?

Manual and mechanical techniques are often good choices when 1) they are effective for the species, and 2) practical given the size of the infestation and the time, energy, and resources available. Many plants on Virginia's Department of Conservation and Recreation invasive plant list (https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/document/nh-invasive-plant-list-2024.pdf) can be managed this way.

However, two main factors can make herbicides appropriate: **biology** and **scale.**

Their biology means some invasive plants simply do not respond well to manual or mechanical control. Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) is a good example. Trees in a colony may be connected

through their roots. Simply cutting them can trigger the root system to send up dozens of new sprouts, sometimes many feet from the original trees. A targeted herbicide treatment can prevent that response.

The scale can also change the equation. Japanese Stiltgrass is shallow-rooted and easy to pull. A small patch can often be removed by hand. But each plant can produce roughly 1,500 seeds. Hand-pulling acres of stiltgrass before those seeds develop may not be realistic.

Before deciding whether to use herbicide, ask:

- Do I have an early detection/rapid response species (https://blueridgeprism.org/early-detection-species) that needs immediate attention before it spreads?
- Can this species realistically be managed using manual or mechanical methods?
- Do I have time to prevent this year's seed crop?
- Do I have time to protect what's most important?

How to use herbicides responsibly

Always remember this mantra for herbicide use: ***First, do no harm.***

Always target the invasive plant rather than surrounding vegetation. The method you choose matters.

Techniques such as cut-stump and hack-and-squirt treatments apply a small amount of precisely targeted herbicide directly onto a cut stem or tree. Carefully directed foliar applications can also target individual plants while preventing contact with nearby vegetation.

Broadcast spraying may sometimes be appropriate for large infestations, but it can also affect desirable plants. The goal is to use the smallest effective amount, applied as selectively as possible.

When to apply herbicides

Timing affects both how well a herbicide works and its potential impact on other organisms.

- **Trees, shrubs, and mature vines:** The general treatment window runs from May through February. Once leaves have fully expanded and photosynthesis begins, nutrients move down toward the roots, helping carry systemic herbicides with them.
- **Flowers:** Treat after plants have enough leaf surface to absorb the herbicide but before they produce seed.
- **Grasses:** Treat before they produce seed.

You also need to consider when pollinators are active. Avoid treating plants while they are blooming and attracting birds and insects. Grasses are wind-pollinated and do not produce nectar, but pollinators may still collect their pollen, so avoid treating them while they are flowering.



Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) threatens local biodiversity and forest health, as well as infrastructure. Abundant seeds, high germination rates, and vigorous vegetative reproduction make diligent control mandatory. Tree of Heaven is also the primary host plant for invasive Spotted Lanternfly. Blue Ridge PRISM photo

Weather matters, too. You should use spray techniques only on calm or nearly windless days to prevent herbicide from drifting onto desirable plants. Also choose days when rain is not expected for at least 24 hours, or as directed on the product label.

For most treatment methods, the best temperatures range between **35°F** and **80°F**, both for herbicide performance and for the comfort and safety of the person applying it.

Goal: The Greatest Benefit and Least Harm

There is no single control method that is right for every invasive plant or every property. Pulling, cutting, mowing, grazing, herbicides, and other approaches all have advantages, limitations, and potential unintended consequences.

The best invasive plant management starts with accurate identification, considers the biology and extent of the infestation, protects people, pets, wildlife, and other plants, and uses the least amount of intervention necessary to achieve effective, lasting control.

***Blue Ridge PRISM** is Virginia's leader in invasive plant education and training. For more information, view PRISM's "Demystifying Herbicides" webinar at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8x4X0kmMFo, which simplifies the complex world of herbicides and their use in invasive plant management.*

Make Counting Birds Part of Your December Traditions

Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count Is Dec. 28

by Joe Coleman, Birding Activities Co-coordinator



Blue skies or gray, dry or wet, birders will be out in force to scan fields, trees, and skies for birds to count on December 28. Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy photo

For over 125 years, people have counted birds in December as part of the world's longest-running citizen science project, the National Audubon Society's Annual Christmas Bird Count. This year, during 2,000 different counts targeting specific areas, people will count every wild bird they can find. The results are used to understand bird populations and dynamics.

Join Loudoun Wildlife on Monday, December 28, as we count birds in the Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count Circle. Count circles have a 15-mile diameter covering 177 square miles. The Central Loudoun Count covers the county north to Waterford, south to Aldie, east to Ashburn, and west to Purcellville. In that area approximately 20 teams will explore the county's natural and not-so-natural areas in search of birds.

The count includes many of Loudoun's very special places, such as the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, the Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project, Beaverdam Reservoir, Morven Park, Ball's Bluff, Waterford's Phillips Farm, several private estates, much of the still-rural western portions of the county, and in Maryland, about 5 miles of the C&O Canal around White's Ferry.

Everyone is welcome; amateurs are teamed with experienced birders, and every eye and ear makes a difference! Counters share their wonder of the wild beauty of feathered creatures with like-minded people and sometimes find truly rare birds. It is always lots of fun!

If you are interested in participating in the count for just a couple of hours or for the entire day — or at your feeders in your very own backyard — sign up online at https://loudounwildlife.org/citizen-science/bird-counts/christmas-bird-count/ by December 22 or contact Joe Coleman (jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org) or Bryan Henson (bhenson@loudounwildlife.org).

Other Nearby Counts

Several other counts include parts of Loudoun County. If you can't make the Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count — or want to participate in more than one count — check out these counts:

- The **Seneca Maryland/Virginia** count on Sunday, December 20, includes five sectors in Virginia ranging from Great Falls Park to the eastern corner of Loudoun County. To participate, contact Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net.
- The **Manassas-Bull Run** count is on Sunday, December 20. To participate, contact Doug Levey by December 13 at neomorphis0920@gmail.com.
- **Sweet Run State Park** in northwestern Loudoun County is part of the **Charlestown, West Virginia**, count on Sunday, December 20. If you'd like to participate on the team that covers **Sweet Run**, contact Joe Coleman (jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).
- The **Calmes Neck** count on Saturday, January 2, includes much of far western Loudoun County and eastern Clarke County. The cutoff date to participate is December 18; contact Margaret Wester at margaretwester@hotmail.com to sign up.
- The **Sugarloaf Mountain** count on Sunday, January 3, includes one sector in Loudoun County around Lucketts and several sectors on the other side of the river in Montgomery and Frederick Counties. Contact coordinator Jo Cox at jobird11@gmail.com or 240-506-1723.

You can see these count circles here: https://experience.arcgis.com/



Red-tailed Hawk. Photo by Michael Sciortino

Book Review: The Feather Wars by James H. McCommons

Review by Steve Allen

In 1860, a flock of Passenger Pigeons a mile across and 300 miles long flew over Lake Ontario.

That flock, containing more than a billion birds, was only a small portion of the most common bird in North America. Fifty years later, the Passenger Pigeons were gone, driven to extinction by relentless hunting.

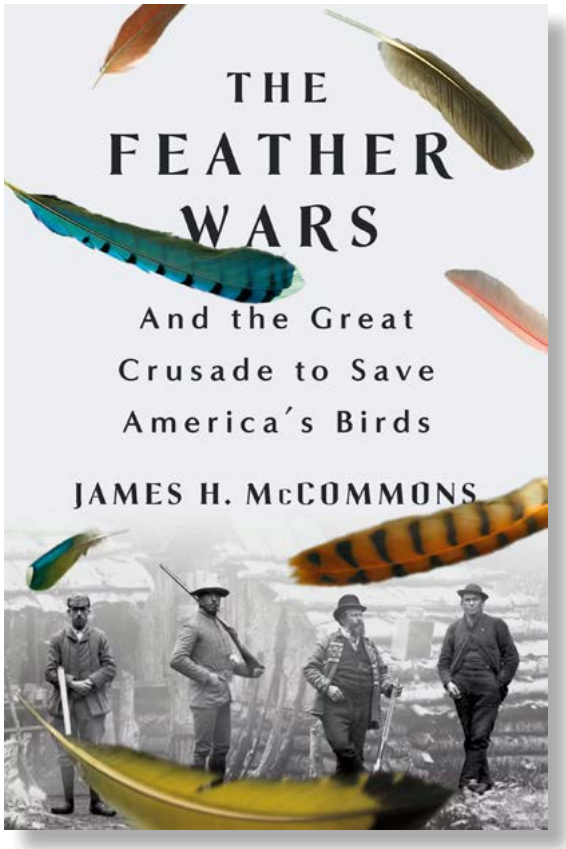
The Feather Wars and the Great Crusade to *Save America's Birds*, by James H. McCommons, is a history of the carnage of our natural resources in the 1800s and the beginnings of the bird conservation movement.

In the 19th century, birds were believed to be an inexhaustible resource, so there were few concerns about their indiscriminate destruction. As a result, numerous species were driven to near extinction. Herons and egrets were slaughtered for their feathers to satisfy the demands of the millinery trade. Ducks, other game birds, and even some songbirds were killed by the hundreds of thousands during mating season by market hunters, who shipped them by the barrel to restaurants and markets in the cities.

At the same time, ornithology was a blood sport. Those interested in the "science" of birds engaged in what McCommons calls "shotgun ornithology," killing a wide variety of birds and skinning them to build vast collections of specimens. Oology — the collection of bird eggs — was also viewed as a scientific endeavor, so its practitioners thought nothing of risking their lives to rob nests of the next generation of birds.

At some point it became clear that the wanton destruction of birds and nests was diminishing the avian population to a degree not thought possible in earlier times, and so the conservation movement began.

The first Audubon Society began in New York City in 1886. All it took to join was mailing a one-penny postcard and making a pledge to do no harm to birds; membership was otherwise free. In one year, 50,000 people joined, but because the group raised no funds and had no administrative structure or legislative agenda, it was quickly and quietly abandoned.



Ten years later, two women in Boston, appalled at the wholesale destruction of egret rookeries to obtain feathers for hats, decided to take action. They formed the Massachusetts Audubon Society for the Protection of Birds (now known as Mass Audubon) with the stated goal of ending the feather trade. Within six months, 700 women in Boston took the pledge to boycott hats with feathers, which were the height of fashion at the time. Similar groups soon formed in other states, and the "first nationwide environmental movement" was born.

Legislative action soon followed. The Bird Game Act of 1900, now known as the Lacey Act after its sponsor (U.S. Rep. John Lacey of Iowa), made it illegal to traffic in wildlife — including birds — that was illegally obtained in the state or locality where it was harvested. This was an important first step but depended on the existence and enforcement of state laws, which were spotty at best.

What was needed was federal legislation protecting living wildlife. A bill called the Migratory Bird Act was introduced, but there were serious concerns as to its constitutionality and whether it interfered with an individual state's right to control wildlife within its borders. The breakthrough came when U.S. Sen. Elihu Root of New York — lawyer, statesman, and Nobel Peace Prize winner — suggested that a treaty with Canada protecting all native wildlife species of the two countries would create an airtight constitutional basis for the legislation. The treaty was soon concluded, and the enabling legislation, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1919 (MBTA), was enacted and held constitutional by the Supreme Court a year later.

While the MBTA was a great victory amplified by later legislation like the Endangered Species Act, McCommons points out that a century later birds are still in decline and facing enormous challenges like window strikes, outdoor cats, and habitat loss.

The Feather Wars is a grand history of the beginnings of the environmental protection movement in the United States, and it is highly recommended reading for those who understand the importance of continuing that mission.

Volunteer Spotlights

by Madison Allen, Volunteer Engagement Coordinator

Loudoun Wildlife is powered by people who share their time and enthusiasm. Each month, we recognize one of these amazing volunteers for their efforts to further our mission. Meet three volunteers united by a purpose: protecting wildlife and welcoming neighbors into conservation.



August: Kate Helein

An ambassador for native plants and practical conservation

After moving to Loudoun about a decade ago, Kate sought a way to continue the conservation work she had enjoyed with the Fairfax County Park Authority. She found that community at Loudoun Wildlife. Kate supports the Native Plant Sale Team, staffs outreach tables, and monitors bluebirds. She helps neighbors see how native landscaping can protect habitat as development reshapes the county. Her travels add a wider lens. From living roofs in Norway to community gardens in Denmark, Kate gathers ideas for balancing growth and sustainability — and brings that optimism home. Kate reminds us that caring for the environment is also an act of caring for one another.

September: Andrea Cubelo-McKay



Growing a stronger community through native plants

Andrea moved to Loudoun in 1999 with a love of gardening that grew into a passion for native plants. She joined the Native Plant Sale in 2022 and stepped into leadership in 2024.

For Andrea, the sale is about far more than plants. A team that pairs hard work with camaraderie and fun helps neighbors see how choices at home can support wildlife. A Virginia Master Naturalist with the Banshee Reeks Chapter, Andrea treasures the Dulles Wetlands. Time outdoors leaves her grounded and connected to the landscape and her community. "Don't be afraid to jump right in," she says. "Folks are kind and eager to teach!"



October: Caroline Foster

Finding new ways to learn, contribute and protect habitat

Caroline began by monitoring bluebirds at Claude Moore Park. Once she discovered Loudoun Wildlife's many opportunities, she "never looked back." She has since helped at plant sales and booths, joined habitat cleanups, and participated in Salt Watch. Nature offers Caroline peace, but the people keep her involved. Childhood memories of exploring Loudoun also give the work urgency as familiar natural areas become subdivisions, shopping centers, and data centers. Those changes convinced Caroline she could not assume someone else would protect local habitats. Her first step opened a world of service and discovery. Her advice: "Do it! Be brave! Find something that sounds fun and jump right in."

Fall Native Plant Sale

Using leafy samples to prove his point, Jim Knowles of Abernethy & Spencer Greenhouse and Garden Center invites an audience at Loudoun Wildlife's Fall Native Plant Sale to "rethink weeds" in their yards — some of them are volunteer native plants. Native plant talks in the shade by Knowles and other experts were just as popular with shopping gardeners as the plants on offer during the September 19 sale at Morven Park in Leesburg. Photo by Melissa Lee



Programs and Field Trips

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

Dates and locations are subject to change. For up-to-date information on our programs or to register, visit www.loudounwildlife.org or contact info@loudounwildlife.org.

Writing in Nature — First Thursdays: November 5, December 3, January 7, February 4, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm, Waterford Foundation. Join Nancy Morgan, director emeritus of the 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.*

JK Black Oak Workday — Saturday, November 7, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for habitat restoration projects that include invasive plant removal, protecting trees, and planting. Please be aware that you may encounter poison ivy and ticks at the work site. Long sleeves and pants, gloves, and insect repellant are recommended. *Limit 20 (minimum age 16).* ***Registration required:*** *Sign Up Online.* ***Questions:*** *Contact Sheila Ferguson at sferguson@loudounwildlife.org. Note: Due to the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, JK Black Oak is not open for general public access.*

Right Tool, Right Time: Herbicides for Invasive Plants — Tuesday, November 10, 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Rust Library Story Time Room. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for an informative discussion on safe and effective herbicide usage for invasive plant management. Leah Sattler, program administrator for Loudoun's Invasive Plant Species Management Program, will discuss best management practices for herbicide usage. Come learn about methods like the window-cut and hack-and-squirt, get information on how to select a herbicide, and leave equipped with the knowledge of how to safely and effectively control invasive plants. ***Registration required:*** *Sign Up Online.*

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. ***Registration required:*** *Sign Up Online.* ***Questions:*** *Contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.*

Second Saturdays: November 14, December 12, January 9, February 13, 8:00 am

Birding Algonkian

Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on a search for birds at Loudoun's top birding hotspot, Algonkian Regional Park in eastern Loudoun, for the monthly bird walk. Combining extensive frontage along the Potomac River, rich bottomland forests, wetlands, and extensive grassy areas, this can be a very productive place to bird. ***Registration required:*** *Sign Up Online.* ***Questions:*** *Contact Bryan Henson at bhenson@loudounwildlife.org.*

Third Sundays (except December): November 15, January 17, 8:00 am

Birding Sweet Run

Sweet Run State Park has 894 acres of diverse habitat consisting of rich oak-hickory forest, meadows, ponds, streams, and vernal pools 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. Sweet Run is located just north of Neersville at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Rte. 671); detailed directions at https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/sweet-run. ***Registration required:*** *Sign Up Online.* ***Questions:*** Contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org. Parking fee: The fee for a standard vehicle is $10. View fee information at https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/parking-fees.

Fourth Saturdays (except December): November 28, January 23, 8:00 am

"We have lived by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world. … We have been wrong. We must change our lives, so that it will be possible to live by the contrary assumption that what is good for the world will be good for us."

- Wendell Berry

Young Birders Walk at Algonkian — Sunday, November 15, 8:00 am. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Young Birding Program for a bird walk for young birders at Algonkian Regional Park. With extensive frontage along the Potomac River, rich bottomland forests, extensive wetlands, and open grassy areas, Algonkian is the county's best birding hotspot. We'll look for year-round residents and early winter arrivals. Meet at the boat ramp; bring binoculars if you have them, or we will have some to share. This walk is for young birders ages 10–18; a parent/guardian is welcome. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.*** ***Questions:*** *Contact Patrick Lewis at plewis@loudounwildlife.org.*

Walk for Wildlife Closing Celebration — Sunday, November 15, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Lost Rhino Brewing Company. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a nature-enthusiasts gathering to celebrate Walk for Wildlife. We'll hand out awards and share some highlights from the event, along with celebrating the citizen science efforts and the positive impact they have on our community.

Birding Bles — Saturday, November 21, 8:00 am. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on a search for birds at Bles Park in eastern Loudoun. Bles is a birding hotspot that borders the Potomac River and has a mix of different water habitats that appeal to a diverse mix of species. We'll meet at the parking lot near the playground. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.*** ***Questions:*** *Contact Bryan Henson at bhenson@loudounwildlife.org.*

Read! Plant! Grow! Book Club — Sunday, November 22, 5:30 – 7:00 pm, Birch Tree Bookstore, Leesburg. Join our partners Watermark Woods Native Plants, Loudoun County Public Library (LCPL), and Birch Tree Bookstore for this book club that focuses on native plants, co-sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and LCPL. At this meeting, we'll discuss the book Evergreen by Trent Preszler, a sweeping natural history of the humble trees that built nations, sparked wars, and provided one of the world's most cherished holiday traditions. To obtain a copy, contact Allison Forbes (Allison.Forbes@loudoun.gov), who will send one to your nearest library for pickup; or purchase it at Birch Tree. Attend in person or online by going to the LCPL website (https://library.loudoun.gov) and clicking Event Calendar to get the link.

Birding Dulles Wetlands — Saturday, December 5, 8:00 am. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for a bird walk at the privately owned Dulles Greenway Wetlands. Built in the early 1990s to replace wetlands lost when the Dulles Greenway was built, this wetlands along Goose Creek near Oatlands is a great place to observe a wide variety of birds, including the magnificent Bald Eagle. ***Expect to encounter rough terrain where walking is difficult, as well as briars and wet/muddy spots.*** Parking information will be sent to participants prior to the walk. *Limit 10.* ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.*** ***Questions:*** *Contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.*

JK Black Oak Workday — Saturday, December 5, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm, JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary. See November 7 for details. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Winter Sowing — Sunday, December 6, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Waterford Foundation. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy and Wildlife Sanctuary Ambassador and Virginia Master Naturalist Brian Magurn for hands-on training for winter-sowing native plants. We will plant native plant seeds in recycled plastic containers that you will bring. We'll provide the soil and will have some seeds to share. It's fun to create your own science experiment each year and patiently wait through the winter, then watch them grow outside in the spring. Thanks to Watermark Woods Native Plants for donating potting soil. ***Family-friendly. Limit 15. Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Cocoa and Conservation Second Saturdays Winter Hiking Series: Tracks in the Thaw — Saturday, December 12, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Red Rock Wilderness Overlook. Join Kelly Roach, outdoor educator and conservation advocate, for this monthly opportunity presented by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to explore the hidden ecological wonders of the season right here in Loudoun. This month, we'll focus on reading Piedmont animal tracks. The muddy, low-lying trail segments close to the Potomac River bank act as a natural canvas sheet for tracks; December thaws keep the mud soft enough to freeze detailed prints of raccoon, deer, and river otter overnight. We provide the warm cocoa, you bring your favorite reusable mug! Each themed walk is a stand-alone event; come to one or join us for the whole series to watch the seasonal shift firsthand. Dress for the elements and wear sturdy footwear. ***Registration required 48 hours in advance:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Open House — Saturday, December 12, 12:00 – 3:00 pm, Waterford Foundation. Join us for an open house at Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's office at the Waterford Foundation. This is a great opportunity to learn more about who we are, what we do, and how we're making a positive impact with the help of our passionate members, supporters, and volunteers. Learn about our inspiring programs, enjoy some seasonal refreshments, grab some Loudoun Wildlife merch for the holidays, meet our staff, and discover how we're working to protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat while shaping a Loudoun where people and wildlife thrive together. We hope to see you there for an afternoon of conversation, learning, and community!

A Croak in the Night — Thursday, December 17, 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Ashburn Library. If you've ever sat outside listening to the frogs and wondered what species of frog you are hearing, then this program is for you! Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for an introduction to our local frog and toad species. Learn how to identify them both visually and by their calls, and learn what you can do to help protect the habitats of this fragile group of amphibians. This presentation is co-sponsored by the Loudoun County Public Library and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. *Family-friendly.* ***Registration requested:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Christmas Bird Count at Sweet Run State Park — Sunday, December 20. Sweet Run State Park in northwestern Loudoun is part of the Charlestown, West Virginia, Christmas Bird Count. If you'd like to participate on the team that covers the park, contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count — Monday, December 28. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy as we participate in the National Audubon Society's annual Christmas Bird Count. Our count circle has a 15-mile diameter and covers 177 square miles of Loudoun's countryside: north to Waterford, south to Aldie, east to Ashburn, and west to Purcellville. Everyone is welcome; amateurs are teamed with experienced birders. For more information, check out the article on Christmas Bird Counts in this issue. If you are interested in participating for just a couple of hours or the entire day, sign up at https://loudounwildlife.org/citizen-science/bird-counts/christmas-bird-count/. ***Questions:*** *Contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org or Bryan Henson at bhenson@loudounwildlife.org.*

Cocoa and Conservation Second Saturdays Winter Hiking Series: Bark and Buds — Saturday, January 9, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Rust Nature Sanctuary. Join Kelly Roach, outdoor educator and conservation advocate, for this monthly opportunity presented by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to explore the hidden ecological wonders of the season right here in Loudoun. This month, we'll focus on winter native tree identification. The woods at Rust Sanctuary feature beautiful stands of mature oaks, hickories, and beeches, alongside a vibrant understory of native dogwoods and American hollies. The stark, bare hardwood canopy allows us to get close to tree trunks to touch unique bark patterns and inspect low-hanging terminal buds. We provide the warm cocoa, you bring your favorite reusable mug! Each themed walk is a stand-alone event; come to one or join us for the whole series to watch the seasonal shift firsthand. Dress for the elements and wear sturdy footwear. *Family-friendly.* ***Registration required 48 hours in advance:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Birding Reservoir Park — Sunday, January 10, 8:00 am. Reservoir Park surrounds Beaverdam Reservoir and includes several miles of hiking trails through the forest that surrounds the lake. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy in searching this rich spot for the wide variety of birds that winter here. *Limit 12.* ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Birding Broad Run Stream Valley Park — Saturday, January 16, 8:00 am. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy in search of birds at this surprisingly rich park along Broad Run that combines several different habitat types, including a rich flood plain on both sides of the stream, edge and meadow habitat, and multiple ponds. The varied habitat 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 15.* ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Young Birders Walk at Gilbert's Corner Regional Park — Sunday, January 24, 9:00 am. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Young Birding Program for a bird walk for young birders at this park in southwestern Loudoun which, with its combination of scrub, brush, and meadow, is a great spot for birding. Bring binoculars if you have them, or we will have some to share. This walk is exclusively for young birders ages 10–18; a parent/guardian is welcome. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.*** ***Questions:*** *Contact Patrick Lewis at plewis@loudounwildlife.org.*

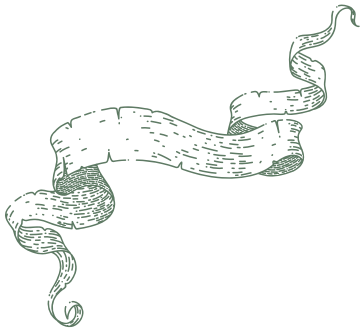
Amphibians and Reptiles 2027 Season Kickoff — Thursday, January 28, 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Rust Library. Amphibians and reptiles are both susceptible to habitat destruction and pollutants and are often victims of being misunderstood. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy for an introductory look at our local species, what we can do to help protect their habitats, and the programs available through Loudoun Wildlife to help monitor populations and increase community awareness of these often overlooked and fragile species. This presentation is co-sponsored by the Loudoun County Public Library. ***Registration requested:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Searching for Birds of Prey: Field Trip — Saturday, January 30, 1:30 pm until dusk. Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy on a winter raptor search. We will split into small groups to drive the back roads of the county with frequent stops to find and identify the many hawks, and hopefully an owl or two, that overwinter here. Participation on the field trip is limited, so register early. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Birding Dulles Wetlands — Saturday, February 6, 8:00 am. See December 5 for details. ***Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Waterfowl of Loudoun County: Field Trip — Saturday, February 13, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Because winter generally brings a variety of attractive waterfowl to our area, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is offering a field trip so you can get to know these beautiful birds. The field trip will visit several local hotspots where we should be able to find many of the species that regularly visit the county. ***Limit 12. Registration required:*** ***Sign Up Online.***

Cocoa and Conservation Second Saturdays Winter Hiking Series: First Harbingers of Spring — Saturday, February 13, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Ball's Bluff Regional Park. Join Kelly Roach, outdoor educator and conservation advocate, for this monthly opportunity presented by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy to explore the hidden ecological wonders of the season right here in Loudoun. This month we will go on a skunk cabbage and spring peeper hunt. The deep, steep ravines dropping down toward the Potomac trap moisture and geothermal warmth. These swampy bottomlands are a premier spot to find skunk cabbage cutting through the ice and to listen for the first waking chorus of tiny native frogs. We provide the warm cocoa, you bring your favorite reusable mug! Each themed walk is a stand-alone event; come to one or join us for the whole series to watch the seasonal shift firsthand. Dress for the elements and wear sturdy footwear. *Family-friendly.* ***Registration required 48 hours in advance:*** ***Sign Up Online.***



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Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is so grateful for your record-breaking support of our mission to protect, preserve, and restore wildlife habitat!