



OAK LEAF

Volume 34; Issue 2

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SHENANDOAH AUDUBON!

May/June 2010

THE SPRING GARDEN FAIR

At the State Arboretum of VA at Blandy Farm, Boyce

An annual spring event, the Blandy Garden Fair is full of vendors selling a wide variety of plants and gardening accessories. What a wonderful way to spend part of your Mother's Day weekend! Come by our tent and say hello. We'd like to see you! \$10 entry per car. VA Route 50, East of Winchester (past 340/ before the River). From Front Royal: Rt 522N to Rt 340NE to Rt 50E. Signs on right.

If you would be available to help us by manning the information table in our tent at the fair for either a morning or afternoon shift, or would be willing to lead a nature walk, please email or call and let us know! You would be paired with another volunteer so you can roam a bit and see the fair, and the beautiful Arboretum grounds, too.

National Audubon's State of the Birds Report 2010

by Gail Souther

The bad news is that the last 40 years has revealed a troubling decline in the U.S. of bird populations and the health of ecosystems.

The good news is that concerted conservation efforts have made a positive difference in restoring habitats and reversing declines.

This was the take home message from last year's first State of the Birds report released by the U.S. Department of the Interior, as part of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.

Building on these findings, the 2010 State of the Birds report tackles "one of the greatest environmental challenges or our time, climate change."

This snapshot of bird populations throughout the U.S. and its far flung territories is based on rating birds by their vulnerability to climate change using five "sensitivity traits": migration status, breeding habit obligate, dispersal ability, niche specificity, and reproductive potential.

Scientists measure these traits against their habitat exposure, with the greatest potential habitat degradation posing the highest risk. Using this assessment, scientists can attach species vulnerability ratings of high, medium or low.

The report presents risks for birds posed by climate change in each of the following major habitats: oceans, coasts, arctic, islands, arid lands, wetlands, grasslands and forests. Recommendations for conservation initiatives or a summary of initiatives already under way is included for each category.

A discussion of the current state of our knowledge and capability to address climate change follows, stressing the need to significantly scale up efforts in developing new technologies and innovative science, minimizing the impact of renewable energy sources, reducing and sequestering greenhouse gases, participating in joint ventures with other organizations, agencies and individuals, and the importance of the federally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans released in 2005. These are required to be updated every 10 years, but many states are opting to update sooner due to the swiftness of emerging threats.

Finally, the report reveals evidence of the northward shift for wintering birds, and the challenges for monitoring programs to incorporate climate change variables, in order to focus on the most sensitive species and best inform conservation and land management decision makers.

This attractively formatted report is available on National Audubon's website: www.audubon.org

Volunteers needed!

We have the following opportunities:

- ⇒ **Monitor Blue Bird boxes at Andy Guest Shenandoah River State Park. Contact Lee Bowen: 540-671-1906, or Roxie Leonard: 540-671-1914**
- ⇒ **Present your knowledge to the group, lead a walk, or speak at an upcoming membership meeting. Contact Diane Sours 540-514-8280**
- ⇒ **Arbor Day in the fall at Blandy. Man a tent table at the fair or lead a birding or nature walk.**
- ⇒ **Build or donate bird houses, bird feeders, and or bat boxes for us to sell at our fundraising events.**
- ⇒ **Birding Festival - we'd love to have ideas for the location, scope and best date for the event. Tell us! We also need volunteers to man tables, coordinate activities, and provide educational talks and activities.**
- ⇒ **Help write, edit and distribute our newsletter.**

Scouts & Students - help out!

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

May 27th

**DISPLAY OF LIVE BIRDS!
PUBLIC WELCOME**

Mr. Ray Miller, who is a member of the Falconry Association of VA, and his Master Falconry guest will display several raptors and talk about their projects in Virginia.

Location to be determined...

Stay tuned! Check the website for event updates. We also plan to send an email update.

**Are you interested? Email us!
shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com**

WINCHESTER NATURE WALK through Abrams Creek Wetlands

**Two Saturdays in May!
May 1st & 15th
8:00 am**

Public Invited; Audubon Members Please Join In!



Come see migrating birds and birds that frequent the Abrams Creek Wetlands and the surrounding area! **Discover local flora and fauna!** Our group will meet at in the Children of America parking lot on Jubal Early Dr, approx. 1/2 mile west of Valley Ave. **The walk will last approximately 2 hours and is non-strenuous.** Bring binoculars, spotting scopes and/or your camera! Participants are also encouraged to bring an umbrella in case of rain.

Contact Jim Smith for more information 540-662-5033

**Visit our website to see up-to-date information on our events and projects!
www.audubon-nsvas.org**

✂ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ✂

A Much Welcomed Spring!

This past winter was harder than usual on many of us in the Valley, mainly due to the unusual snowstorms that dumped 28+ inches of snow, practically paralyzing the Mid Atlantic for a week or more in some places. Unfortunately, I assume this was especially true for our feathered and furry friends living wild out-of-doors. I'm sure many wild animals found it difficult to navigate the 21+ inches of snow that fell in just a few days in the Valley in February 2010. Then in early April we experienced a week with days of 90+F degree weather, causing trees to bud earlier than usual. Pollen levels are extremely high this spring as a result of higher than normal precipitation and warm temperatures.

Sudden and dramatic changes in the normal weather patterns for our area can have immediately visible and possibly long-lasting effects on indigenous plants and animals - especially those that are ill equipped to function in unusual environmental extremes. In nature, if you don't adapt, you perish. I'd like to draw a parallel to our organization. Recent extreme and unusual conditions have forced us to adapt as an organization. To accomplish this though, we will need to adopt different methods of doing things with a cooperative spirit. And we should do so with the faith that the organization will be stronger and more effective because of it.

Thank you to all of you that have taken time from your very busy schedules to join us on our journey of renewal. Thanks to those of you who came out for nature walks, events and meetings so far this year. I was very pleased to see a family from Luray join the nature walk at Abrams Creek Wetlands Preserve in Winchester. We are planning to offer events, meetings and programs in different locations within our Chapter service area so more members can participate. I'd like to extend a special thank you to all of the event leaders and presenters who have made our programs possible this year! Thank you for giving of your time and knowledge to educate our members, and the public, about many fascinating biological, environmental and conservation related topics.

I hope to see you soon. Please contact us if you are at all interested in volunteering. We have many opportunities for you to lend a hand!

- Diane Greco, SA President

MIDDLE SCHOOL BIRD TALKS - May 11 & 12

The VA Cooperative Extension presents an annual Conservation Awareness Program to each of the Frederick County Middle Schools. This year, Diane Kline and Patsy Goochouer will be making the presentations for Shenandoah Audubon. The SA bird talk is one of 9 to 10 other talks by environmental groups made available to students in May or early June. **The NSVAS topic is "Birds and Migration".** The four schools and dates/times are as follows:

Tuesday, May 11: *Frederick County Middle School - 8:30-10:30am*
Richard E. Byrd Middle School - 12:30-2:30pm
Wednesday, May 12: *James Wood Middle School - 8:35-10:30am*
Aylor Middle School - 12:40-2:40pm

Sam Patten started presenting these talks with Charlie Clevenger on Bluebirds years ago. Each group is allocated 13 minutes for its presentation. Each school has 8 to 9 classes. This year there are four schools, so the SA presentation will be made 32-35 times over two days!



Please send all correspondence to: NSVAS, PO Box 515
Winchester, VA 22604

Email: shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com

Headquarters: The State Arboretum of VA
400 Blandly Farm Rd, Boyce, VA

www.audubon-nsvas.org

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Society (NSVAS), dba Shenandoah Audubon, is a chapter of the National Audubon Society (NAS) and a member of the Virginia Audubon Council (VAC) and of the Virginia Environmental Network (VEN). This newsletter belongs to the NSVAS membership. **Chapter Code: X-54.**

2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President: Diane Greco (514-8280)
1st Vice President: Cynthia Fenton (535-8955)
2nd Vice President: no nomination submitted
Secretary: Jeannie Senter (722-1169)
Treasurer: Christine Harden (868-8464)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation: Kaycee Lichliter (869-5152)
Education: To Be Appointed
Field Trips: Margaret Wester (837-2799)
Finance: Christine Harden
Membership: Lee Bowen (635-2547)
Programs: To Be Appointed
Public Relations: Margaret Wester



SPECIAL PROJECT CONTACTS

Audubon Arboretum: Jim Smith (662-5033)
Scott Kenney (722-9551)
Bird Counts: Margaret Wester, Calmes Neck area;
Rob & Ann Simpson (869-2150), N. Shenandoah area
Birding Festival: Contact us if you can help out in the fall!
Bird Nest Box Construction: Charlie Clevenger (869-2180)
Bird Seed Sale: Contact us if you can help out!
Bluebird Trail at Blandly Farm: Kaycee Lichliter
Hawk Watch at Snicker's Gap (Sept.): Jim Smith
Newsletter Editor (Interim): Cynthia Fenton (535-8955)
Contact us if you can help out!
Web Page Coordinator: Margaret Wester

(All phone numbers are area code 540 unless otherwise noted.)

- ~ All members are encouraged to attend Membership meetings and Public programs.
- ~ All members are welcome to attend Board Meetings and help plan activities.
- ~ Please contact us if you can donate an hour or more of your time to help us keep our Chapter going!

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you, contributors! The *Oak Leaf* is distributed in March, May, September, and November. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this publication.

The Annual Membership Banquet was held on March 20th. Two volunteers were honored, Roxie Leonard, past Program Chair, and Lee Bowan, Past President. Both received framed photographic prints with engraved brass plates commemorating their volunteer service - thank you again to you both for your continuing volunteer efforts with the Bluebird trail at Andy Guest State Park and other projects!

- Cynthia Fenton, Interim Editor

CONSERVE PAPER, INK AND POSTAGE - GET YOUR OAK LEAF ELECTRONICALLY!
Email us with your request to be on our e-newsletter mailing list today!

What Our Audubon Membership Means

Dear Members & Friends of Shenandoah Audubon (NSVAS),

Many thanks to all who renewed their Chapter membership for 2010. I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to those who joined us for the first time this year. Many, many thanks to those who included a contribution to one of our projects in addition to their dues payment. We are an organization of dues paying members, a community of like-minded individuals who, out of concern for the environment, go out of our way to support conservation efforts. We would sincerely like to ask you to contact us if you'd like to assist by volunteering your time and/or resources. Also, tell us what programs you have liked the best in the past and what you'd like to see presented in the future. We'd love to talk with you!

The NSVAS 2010-2012 Board of Directors is truly excited about planning events, meetings and conservation activities for the benefit of our members and the community; however we cannot do this without effective communication from everyone involved.

From this point forward, the Board would prefer that members of our organization not act in the name of Shenandoah Audubon without first communicating their intentions to, and gaining approval from, the current Board. Also, people who have resigned or are no longer on the Board and are still being contacted about Chapter events and Board business, we request that you please refer all NSVAS business to the current Board.

Due to a special review of the Chapter's budget and resources, all programs and actions that were approved prior to March 2010 are under review by the current Board and are on hold until approved. Events that have been reviewed are then announced on our website, in the *Oak Leaf* newsletter, and in our email communications.

We invite all of you to contact members of our current Board with regard to the following:

- membership dues, mailings, contact phone or email changes
- upcoming events, presentations and meetings
- organizational information, volunteering
- donation of materials or physical items to NSVAS
- the removal of any materials or property donated to NSVAS or National Audubon
- collaboration of efforts of SA and other organizations



Committee Chairs and Board Officers can all be reached by email at shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com, or by mail at Shenandoah Audubon, PO Box 515, Winchester, VA 22604. Phone contacts are listed on page 2.

This Board is committed to open and honest communication with Chapter members. In order to improve our organization and foster growth, we plan to follow the Chapter guidelines set forth by National Audubon. Board meetings are open to members and dates and times are advertised in our newsletter and on our website, www.audubon-nsvas.org.

We plan to continue to send friendly reminders of a variety of events at different locations in the areas we serve, and also to keep you abreast of our progress and growth based on your participation, membership dues and donations.

If you have any questions or comments, or are willing to volunteer a hour or two of your time to assist us in our mission to preserve and maintain the environment for the animals who live there, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We hope to see you this year!

- Cynthia Fenton, SA Vice President

BIRDING LOCATIONS IN THE NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY

LOCATION	HABITAT DESCRIPTION	KEY BIRDS SEEN
Thompson Wildlife Management Area (VNPS trail)	High elevation woodland	American Redstart migration warblers
Sky Meadows State Park	High elevation meadow Woodland & stream Old farm fields & pond	Red Headed Woodpecker
Shenandoah River State Park "Andy Guest"	River, woodlands wetlands, mountains	Bald Eagle, Osprey Cormorants; Kingfisher Red Tailed Hawk Louisiana Water Thrush Orioles
VA State Arboretum, Blandly Exp. Farm	Open fields with wooded edge, succession fields Pond, spring wetland Woodland and groves	Bluebird, Bob-white Cedar Waxwing 2010-Long tailed duck Tree Swallow
Abrams Creek Wetland	Wetland, pond	Green & GB Heron; Osprey; Kingfisher



Please "Google" websites for the above for locations, directions and more information, including bird lists. The species listed above are just a few.

A big thank you to Apple Blossom U-Store-It in Boyce for their donation of a full YEAR OF COMPLEMENTARY STORAGE FOR SA! Call them for your storage needs!

REPORT: Audubon Walk at Shenandoah River State Park with Fred & Ann Bogar

Nine birders from the Shenandoah Audubon Society walked the Cottonwood and Bluebird Trails at Andy Guest Shenandoah River State Park on Saturday, April 10, 2010 from 0900 to 1230. The highlight of the trip was the near peak display of Virginia Bluebells.

The following birds were observed:

Double-crested Cormorant - 1
Black Vulture - 2
Turkey Vulture - 5
Canada Goose - 4
Wood Duck - 2
Bald Eagle - 1
Wild turkey - 4
Mourning Dove - 1
Red-bellied Woodpecker - 2
Downy Woodpecker - 1
Blue Jay - 1
American Crow - 4
Tree Swallow - 40
Northern Rough-winged Swallow - 2
Carolina Chickadee - 4
Tufted Titmouse - 2
Carolina Wren - 4
American Robin - 1
Louisiana Waterthrush - 1
Chipping Sparrow - 1
White-throated Sparrow - 2 HNS
Indigo Bunting - 1
Northern Cardinal - 2 HNS
Red-winged Blackbird - 4
American goldfinch - 3

The following butterflies were seen

Cabbage White
Zebra Swallowtail
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
Spring Azure
Fritillary Species
Monarch
Juvenal's Duskywing
Mourning Cloaks have been reported in the Park but were not seen



"RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED"

PO BOX 515
Winchester, VA 22604

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION



Please recycle this newsletter!

SHENANDOAH AUDUBON CALENDAR OF EVENTS (outdoor events subject to cancellation due to bad weather)
No Membership Meetings in Jan., Jul., Aug., or Dec. Dates and locations subject to change.

DATE & PLACE	EVENT DESCRIPTION	CONTACT INFORMATION
May 1 / 8 am City of Winchester	Bird & Nature Walk with Jim Smith Join naturalist Jim Smith & experience the wonders of Abrams Creek Wetlands. Slow paced, on level paved ground, though wetlands & meadows. Bring your binoculars, water bottle & dress according to the weather. Meet at the Children of America parking lot on W Jubal Early Dr in Winchester. Come learn about our natural wetlands.	Jim Smith 540-667-0504
May 8 / 5:30 am Big Meadows Shenandoah National Park	Sunrise walk at Shenandoah National Park Meet walk leaders Fred and Ann Bogar at the Big Meadows sign in front of the Byrd Visitor Center, Skyline Drive mile marker 51, <i>by 5:25 am</i> . Be prepared to walk several miles in uneven & possibly wet terrain. After meadow hike, optional breakfast at the visitor's center then explore the trail to Dark Hollow Falls. Please time your trip to arrive on time - it takes more than 1.5 hrs to reach mm 51 from Winchester by car.	Group size is limited! RSVP now if you're interested! Fred Bogar 540-305-7521
May 8	INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY <i>Sponsored by US Fish and Wildlife</i> Participate in a Spring Bird Count! Visit the North American Migration Count website.	Visit the USF&W website & www.eBird.org
May 8 & 9 9 am - 4:30 pm State Arboretum of VA, Boyce	Blandy Garden Fair Mother's Day - bring Mom & treat her to a garden gift! NSVAS information table, bird house sale & Nature Walk (11 am) - Members are encouraged to participate!	shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com Call or email if you want to volunteer!
May 15 / 8 am In Winchester	Bird & Nature Walk with Jim Smith Join naturalist Jim Smith for an easy walk through the Abrams Creek Wetlands <i>(SEE MAY 1 FOR INFO)</i>	Jim Smith 540-667-0504
May 19 / 6 pm State Arboretum of VA, Boyce	BOARD of DIRECTORS MEETING Meet in the Blandy Library. Members are welcome to attend.	shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com
May 22 / 10 am - 2 pm Shenandoah River "Andy Guest" State Park	Community Day <i>Sponsored by the Friends of SRSP</i> SA will be leading a nature walk (time TBA) Visit our booth! www.riverparkfriends.org	shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com
May 27 / time TBA Location to be determined	Membership Meeting & Public Program DISPLAY OF LIVE BIRDS! Mr. Ray Miller, who is a member of the Falconry Association of VA, & his Master Falconry guest display several raptors & talk about their projects in Virginia.	shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com
June 5 / 10 am Near Capon Bridge, WV	Field trip to Ice Mountain Led by naturalist Kristin Zimet. Meet at the Ice Mountain access point (carpool if you can, parking space is very limited). Wear hiking boots, bring lunch & water, binoculars, etc. This educational walk will include birding as well as exploring the flora & other natural features unique to this location.	Space is limited so register today if you have interest! shenandoahaudubon@yahoo.com