



FIELD TRIP

JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary

Monday, April 27, 2026
12:30p.m. - 5:30p.m. ET

Register Here

Limited tickets available through March 31st or until sold out.

If the field trip is full, you will be placed on a waiting list and be notified via email if there are cancellations.

We will be traveling via bus to the field trip site.

Join representatives from Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for guided walks exploring wetland ecology, restoration, and conservation at JK Black Oak Wildlife Sanctuary, an 89-acre preserve owned and stewarded by LWC near Luckett's, Virginia. To protect the environmentally sensitive habitat and rare species, the sanctuary is not open for general public access.

In 2018, biologists from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage program determined the property is a globally rare wetland due to the vernal pools, mature forest, unique geologic setting, rare amphibians, and other elements it harbors.

Participants will explore:

- **Vernal pool ecology on karst:** Explore vernal pools in varied habitats that may host vernal pool obligate species including fairy shrimp, Eastern Spadefoot, Jefferson salamanders, and wood frogs during appropriate hydroperiods, and learn about amphibian and reptile monitoring.

- **Habitat restoration:** See projects in action funded by Microsoft/Society for Ecological Restoration grants including forest recovery, meadow enhancement, and vernal pool restoration. Participants will learn about the challenges and opportunities of partnership work on a future wetlands conversion project and ongoing invasive species management.
- **Community science informing decisions:** Learn how stream monitoring data led to an EPA mandate for a new wastewater treatment plant at a neighboring site.
- **Conservation advocacy and infrastructure threats:** Understand advocacy efforts to address potential impacts of a proposed Route 15 Bypass that could cut through or isolate the property.

Active volunteer programs include amphibian and reptile surveys, stream health assessments, bat monitoring, vegetation surveys, insect surveys, and monthly habitat restoration workdays.

Additional Technical Details:

- Vegetation of the seasonal ponds fits the concept of the Piedmont Upland Depression Swamp (Pin Oak - Swamp White Oak Type)
- The site hosts over 1,000 species including nearly 30 species of concern such as the Northern long-eared bat, Silver-haired bat, Eastern Spadefoot, and Jefferson Salamander
- The wetland type is endemic to a few counties in Northern Virginia

Guides:

- Gerco Hoogeweg, PhD, LWC, Wildlife Sanctuary Manager
- Jenny Erickson, LWC, Amphibian and Reptile Monitoring Program Coordinator
- Trinity Mills, LWC, Conservation Advocacy Coordinator
- Amy Ulland, LWC, Board President and Stream Monitoring Program Coordinator
- Maggie Jamison, TNC, Wetland Restoration Project Manager
- Chris DuBois, TNC, Stewardship Coordinator

Safety and Pre Information:

- Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring bug spray (ticks are present), sun protection. A portable toilet is available on site, but there is no drinking water.
- Light snacks and bottled water will be provided.
- All field trip participants are required to sign a liability waiver and provide an emergency contact.