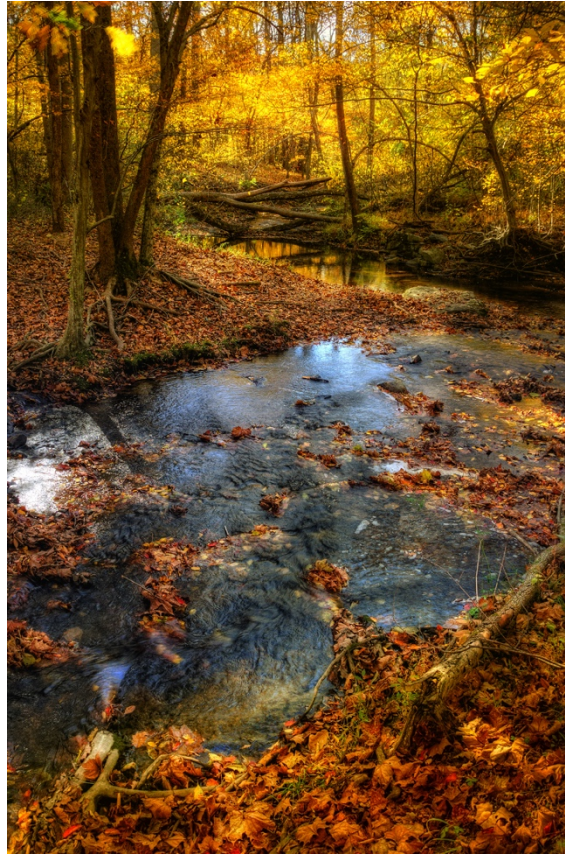


Conservation

Environmental conservation is at the core of the Blue Ridge Center's mission. Our 900-acre property is governed by a conservation easement that ensures the land will be preserved for today's visitors as well as future generations.

Onsite at the Blue Ridge Center, we demonstrate our commitment to sustainability and conservation through our stewardship techniques. Please explore the topics below for additional information:

- Land & Nature
- Wildlife
- History
- Archaeology
- Mountain View Farm



Land & Nature

The Blue Ridge Center developed a long-term plan for our land's stewardship after a comprehensive, two year ecological and conservation study. If you'd like to "read deep" about our land management philosophy, download our Conservation Management Plan.



Explore the sections below to learn more about the land and nature being preserved at the Blue Ridge Center:

- Land
- Water
- Geology
- Weather
- Flora

Land

The Blue Ridge Center sits on the westernmost edge of the Piedmont region of northern Virginia, at the narrowing north end of a valley known as "Between the Hills." The land is 20 miles from both Leesburg, VA and Frederick, MD, and 2 miles south of Harpers Ferry, WV, where the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers converge.

To the west, the Blue Ridge rises to roughly 1,000 feet and is capped by the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. To the east, the property ends at Virginia Route 671, a road that runs the valley floor north-to-south. Further east is Short Hill Mountain.

The lands of the Blue Ridge Center include young recovering upland forest, wetlands, bottomland, meadows, farmland, ponds, and streams. Upland areas are rugged with rocky outcrops. Several springs originate within the property and drain into Sweet Run and Piney Run, which in turn empty into the Potomac River. Elevations on the land range from 500 feet to 1,000 feet above sea level. The underlying valley geology consists of hornblende gneiss.

The farmland portion of the property has, for decades, been planted in corn and soy beans after a much longer history as a dairy farm. Some parts of the upland forest were logged as recently as 1995, and these areas are laced with a network of haul roads. The ridgeline section of the land has remained untouched since being logged in the 1800s, and consists of a maturing oak-poplar forest.

The woodlands are rich with life, with many native species of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. Having been introduced intentionally or accidentally, invasive species such as garlic mustard and multiflora rose are intermixed with native plants.

Water

The Blue Ridge Center is located in the Potomac Watershed, a region covering more than 14,670 square miles. The Potomac River is 383 miles long and breaks through the Blue Ridge Mountains at Harpers Ferry. This is where Piney Run, which drains the land of the Blue Ridge Center, empties into the river at Potomac Wayside, downriver from Harpers Ferry.

Piney Run is fed by one major tributary, Sweet Run, which drains from the Blue Ridge's eastern ridgeline. Both Piney Run and Sweet Run are remarkably diverse and are inhabited by numerous species of fish. A smaller, unnamed seasonal run drains west from Short Hill Mountain and converges with Piney Run on our land. A variety of seeps, perennial springs, and seasonal streams feed Piney Run and its tributaries.

The streams, ponds, and wetlands of the Blue Ridge Center host a large number of reptiles and amphibians, including the Virginia-listed threatened wood turtle. The range of water habitats also ensures insect and bird diversity. Good water quality is essential to healthy ecological systems. Industrial pollutants, agricultural and residential runoff, septic system leakage and acid rain can all contribute to water quality decline. The Blue Ridge Center waterways benefit from regular monitoring, sampling, and testing by a number of our educational partners.

Geology

Geology first shaped the land at the Blue Ridge Center. Topography, rocks, soils, and drainage help determine the nature of ecological systems and the unfolding patterns of human exploration, settlement, and land use. The Blue Ridge Center's research explores the interrelated web of geological, environmental, and human forces that have shaped ongoing relationships on our land.

The land of the Blue Ridge Center is part of the Harpers Ferry quadrangle, covering a portion of the Blue Ridge-South Mountain area. Elevations range from 500 ft. on the eastern edge to nearly 1,000 ft. atop the ridgeline.

The Blue Ridge consists of up-thrust belts of rock that have been subjected to intense metamorphic deformation, and a bedrock of sandstone, metabasalt, and gneiss underlies the Blue Ridge Center property. Through time, these materials erode, sloughing off the main ridges in blocks and plates. The western half of our property, as a result, is composed of steep ledges surrounded by immense fields of jagged boulders. The thin rocky soils of these upland zones give way to the richer top soils in the bottomland and riparian environment found along Piney Run.

The Blue Ridge Mountain's oldest rock is Proterozoic gneiss and igneous intrusives that have been intensively folded and faulted. As in many places along the Blue Ridge, this crushed and distorted older rock is thrust-faulted up and over younger rock. Ancient layered bedrock outcrops can be seen in northern Virginia and on South Mountain in Maryland. Both the summit of South Mountain and the Blue Ridge of Virginia are composed mostly of quartzite and greenstone.

Visit the U.S. Geological Survey website for maps and reports on lands surrounding the Blue Ridge Center.

Weather

In our region, the present climate is temperate with four distinct seasons. Virginia's average temperature varies from 36 degrees Fahrenheit during winter months, to mid 50's in spring and fall, to mid 70's in summer. Virginia's average annual total precipitation is 44 inches. The state's average annual snowfall varies from 9 to 27 inches, all according to the Virginia Climatology Office.

This temperate climate, with its balance of hot and cold, wet and dry weather, largely determines our region's flora and fauna. It prevents the 900 acres at the Blue Ridge Center from turning into searing desert, rainforest, or frigid tundra. Oaks and hickories, white-tail deer, black bears (and local humans, for that matter) have all adapted themselves well to living in Virginia's temperate zone.

However, the moderate climate we take for granted today is very different from our region's past climates. Over the last few million years, climate conditions in Virginia have ranged from the subtropical to the sub-arctic. Flora and fauna appropriate to those ancient climates evolved on the landscape during each of those climactic periods. For example, cold-loving mastodons probably roamed Loudoun county at the height of the last Ice Age, just 18,000 years ago.

Climate is so powerful in the long term that it actually counteracts the gargantuan mountain building forces of geology. In Loudoun county, for example, climate acting over millions of years whittled away the ancient Appalachian Mountain chain, cutting down what some scientists say were 30,000 foot peaks (as high as today's Himalayans) to the current size of the Blue Ridge in northern Virginia undefined just over 1,000 feet above sea level.

Flora & Fauna

Fifteen distinct habitats have been surveyed at the Blue Ridge Center, ranging from a maturing chestnut oak ridgetop forest, to young recovering upland and riparian forests.

Loudoun county is in a transitional zone, and our land represents a rich mix of northern and southern trees. The primary forest community type on the property is the mixed mesophytic forest, with tulip poplar, a variety of oaks, and maples and hickory types numbering among the dominant tree species. Common understory species include slippery elm, beech, dogwood, and redbud. The typical shrub layer includes spice bush, blackberry, with some mountain laurel. Bottomland is inhabited by typical wetland species such as sycamore and buttonbush. Wildflowers identified include naked leaved pink trefoil and velvet leaf.

Numbering among the most common invasive plants are ailanthus (tree of heaven), Chinese sumac, white mulberry, Japanese honeysuckle, garlic mustard, barberry, multiflora rose, and spotted knapweed.

The table below inventories the flora and fauna at the Blue Ridge Center:

Botanical/Vegetative Baseline Inventory	
* denotes non-native species	
Pteridophyta	
Christmas Fern	<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>
Gymnospermae	
Norway Spruce*	<i>Picea abies</i>
Virginia Pine	<i>Pinus virginiana</i>
White Pine	<i>Pinus strobus</i>
Eastern Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
Angiospermae	
Dicot Trees, Shrubs & Woody Vines	
Boxelder	<i>Acer negundo</i>
Norway Maple*	<i>Acer platanoides</i>
Red Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
Silver Maple	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>
Tree-of-Heaven*	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>
Hazel Alder	<i>Alnus serrulata</i>
Ironwood	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>
Pignut Hickory	<i>Carya glabra</i>
Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>
Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>
Flowering Dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>
American Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
White Ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>
Common Witchhazel	<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>
Black Walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>

Mountain Laurel	<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>
Tulip Poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
White Mulberry	<i>Morus alba</i>
Japanese Honeysuckle*	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>
Scentless Mock Orange	<i>Philadelphus inodorus</i>
Eastern Sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>
Black Cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>
White Oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>
Chestnut Oak	<i>Quercus montana</i>
Staghorn Sumac	<i>Rhus typhina</i>
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Carolina Rose	<i>Rosa carolina</i>
Multiflora Rose*	<i>Rosa multiflora</i>
Black Raspberry	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Blackberry	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Raspberry	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>
American Basswood	<i>Tilia americana</i>
Slippery Elm	<i>Ulmus americana</i>
Nannyberry	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>
Lowbush Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium vacillans</i>
Grasses, Sedges	
Not yet inventoried	
Herbaceous plants	
Velvet Leaf	<i>Abutilon theophrasti</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Wingstem	<i>Actinomeris alternifolia</i>

Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia</i> sp.
Garlic Mustard*	<i>Alliaria officinalis</i>
Wild Onion*	<i>Allium stellatum</i>
Scarlet Pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>
Common Milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>
Poke Milkweed	<i>Asclepias exaltata</i>
Tickseed-Sunflower	<i>Bidens aristosa</i>
Wild Sensitive-plant	<i>Cassia nictitans</i>
Spotted Knapweed*	<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>
Spotted Wintergreen	<i>Chimaphila maculata</i>
Ox-eyed Daisy	<i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i>
Chicory*	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>
Bull Thistle*	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Virgin's-Bower	<i>Clematis virginiana</i>
Asiatic Dayflower*	<i>Commelina communis</i>
Field Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>
Queen Anne's Lace*	<i>Daucus carota</i>
Naked-leaved Pink Trefoil	<i>Desmodium nudiflorum</i>
Deptford Pink*	<i>Dianthus armeria</i>
Wild Yam	<i>Dioscorea villosa</i>
Indian Strawberry*	<i>Duchesnea indica</i>
Fleabane	<i>Erigeron annuus</i>
Horseweed	<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>
Common Fleabane	<i>Erigeron philadelphicus</i>
Common Strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>
Cranesbill Geranium	<i>Geranium</i> sp.
Rough Avens	<i>Geum virginianum</i>

Bowman's Root	<i>Gillenia trifoliata</i>
Ground Ivy*	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
King Devil	<i>Hieracium pratense</i>
Dwarf St. John's Wort	<i>Hypericum mutilum</i>
Ivy-Leaved Morning-Glory	<i>Ipomoea hederacea</i>
Wild Potato Vine	<i>Ipomoea pandurata</i>
Blue Lettuce	<i>Lactuca sp.</i>
Butter and Eggs*	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>
Great Lobelia	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>
Indian Tobacco	<i>Lobelia inflata</i>
White Sweet Clover*	<i>Melilotus alba</i>
Yellow Sweet Clover*	<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>
Sharp-winged Monkey Flower	<i>Mimulus alatus</i>
Indian Pipe	<i>Monotropa uniflora</i>
Common Evening-Primrose	<i>Oenothera biennis</i>
Yellow Wood Sorrel	<i>Oxalis stricta</i>
Foxglove Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>
Garden Phlox	<i>Phlox paniculata</i>
Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>
Pokeweed	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>
Common Plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Mayapple	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>
Halberd-leaved Tearthumb	<i>Polygonum arifolium</i>
Lady's Thumb Smartweed	<i>Polygonum persicaria</i>
Strawberry Weed*	<i>Potentilla norvegica</i>
Rough-fruited Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla recta</i>
Common Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla simplex</i>
Heal-all	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>

Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>
Thin-leaved Sunflower	<i>Rudbeckia triloba</i>
Bouncing Bet	<i>Saponaria officinalis</i>
Wild Basil	<i>Satureja vulgaris</i>
Showy Skullcap	<i>Scutellaria serrata</i>
Bur-Cucumber	<i>Sicyos angulatus</i>
Blue-eyed Grass	<i>Sisyrinchium</i> sp.
Horse Nettle	<i>Solanum carolinense</i>
Spiny-leaved Sow Thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>
Venus's Looking Glass	<i>Specularia perfoliata</i>
Skunk Cabbage	<i>Symplocarpus foetidus</i>
Common Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Virginia Knotweed	<i>Tovara virginiana</i>
Hop Clover	<i>Trifolium agrarium</i>
Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Smaller Hop Clover	<i>Trifolium procumbens</i>
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Stinging Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Common Mullien	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
White Vervain	<i>Verbena urticifolia</i>

Wildlife

With nearly 900 acres of land surrounded by a few thousand additional acres of protected and undeveloped land, the Blue Ridge Center is both home to wildlife and an indicator of ecological health of the Northern Blue Ridge. Whatever your interest, be it wildflowers or salamanders, the Blue Ridge Center has a rich diversity of wildlife to discover. We've identified 130 species of birds, 60 species of butterflies, and you can walk the trails looking for signs of fox and bobcat.



Read the details below to find out more information about the types of wildlife and variety of species living at the Blue Ridge Center:

- Mammals
- Birds
- Butterflies
- Reptiles
- Fish

Mammals

Animals on the property are typical of those generally found within recovering mixed mesophytic Blue Ridge forests. The white footed mouse, eastern chipmunk, gray squirrel, and eastern cottontail number among the smaller species, with raccoon, and white-tailed deer among the larger. Coyotes, beavers, black bears and red and grey foxes have been sighted, and there is abundant evidence of bobcats.

Mammal Baseline Inventory	
Eastern Gray Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>
Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>
Groundhog	<i>Marmota monax</i>
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>
Opossum	<i>Didelphis marsupialis</i>
Striped Skunk	<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>

Eastern Cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>
Eastern Chipmunk	<i>Tamias striatus</i>
White-footed Mouse	<i>Peromyscus leucopus</i>
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>
White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>

Birds

The variety of birds found at the Blue Ridge Center is unique in the Mid-Atlantic region. We have been named a "birding hotspot" by the Fairfax Audubon Society and are featured as a location in Virginia's Birding and Wildlife Trail. The Blue Ridge Center also serves as a release site for rehabilitated birds through the Raptor Society of Virginia. Additionally, we're proud to host a monthly bird walk led by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy; please check our online calendar for upcoming dates. Conversely, use our "Birds of a Feather" trail map for a self-guided excursion.



A rich bird life is ensured at the Blue Ridge Center because of open fields, fence rows, riparian areas, deciduous forests, wetlands, ponds and rock outcrops. So far, 25 species of warblers have been identified, and our bird list stands at about 130 species. Wading birds, such as herons, are a common occurrence. Open area species such as mourning doves and field sparrows, as well as birds of prey, benefit from the diverse habitats the Blue Ridge Center offers. Wood ducks and double-crested cormorants are regular visitors to Gordon Pond. Eastern bluebirds, Carolina wrens and tree swallows take full advantage of our 90+ bluebird boxes.

Since May of 2001, the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy has sponsored International Migratory Bird Day bird counts here at the Blue Ridge Center. Thanks to the many volunteers that take part, we have added new birds to the list below every year. Some highlights include: summer tanager, northern harrier, cooper's hawk, red-headed woodpecker, yellow-billed cuckoos, and incredible numbers of blue-winged warblers. Read more in the table below or download our bird brochure.

Bird Baseline Inventory

Herons, Ibis and New World Vultures - Order: Ciconiiformes

Herons and Bitterns - Family: Ardeidae

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

Green Heron	<i>Butorides striatus</i>
New World Vultures - Family: Cathartidae	
Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
Swans, Geese and Ducks - Order: Anseriformes	
Swans, Geese and Ducks - Family: Anatidae	
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>
Eagles, Kites, Falcons and Hawks - Order: Falconiformes	
Eagles, Kites & Hawks - Family: Accipitridae	
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperi</i>
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Grouse, Turkey and Quail - Order: Galliformes	
Grouse - Family: Phasianidae	
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>
Shorebirds - Order: Charadriiformes	
Plovers - Family: Charadriidae	
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>
Doves - Order: Columbiformes	
Pigeons and Doves - Family: Columbidae	
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
Rock Dove	<i>Columba livia</i>
Cuckoos - Order: Cuculiformes	

Cuckoos - Family: Cuculidae	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus
Owls - Order: Strigiformes	
Owls - Family: Strigidae	
Great Horned Owl	Bubo virginianus
Barred Owl	Strix varia
Swifts and Hummingbirds - Order: Apodiformes	
Swifts - Family: Apodidae	
Chimney Swift	Chaetura pelagica
Hummingbirds - Family: Trochilidae	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Archilochus colubris
Kingfishers - Order: Coraciiformes	
Kingfishers - Family: Alcedinidae	
Belted Kingfisher	Ceryle alcyon
Woodpeckers - Order: Piciformes	
Woodpeckers - Family: Picidae	
Red-headed Woodpecker	Melanerpes erythrocephalus
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Melanerpes carolinus
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Sphyrapicus varius
Downy Woodpecker	Picoides pubescens
Hairy Woodpecker	Picoides villosus
Northern Flicker	Colaptes auratus
Pileated Woodpecker	Dryocopus pileatus
Perching birds - Order: Passeriformes	
Flycatchers - Family: Tyrannidae	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Contopus virens
Acadian Flycatcher	Empidonax virens
Eastern Phoebe	Sayornis phoebe

Great Crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus crinitus
Eastern Kingbird	Tyrannus tyrannus
Vireos - Family: Vireonidae	
White-eyed Vireo	Vireo griseus
Yellow-throated Vireo	Vireo flavifrons
Red-eyed Vireo	Vireo olivaceus
Philadelphia Vireo	Vireo philadelphicus
Jays & Crows - Family: Corvidae	
Blue Jay	Cyanocitta cristata
American Crow	Corvus brachyrhynchos
Fish Crow	Corvus ossifragus
Northern Raven	Corvus corax
Swallows - Family: Hirundinidae	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Stelgidopteryx serripennis
Tree Swallow	Tachycineta bicolor
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica
Chickadees & Titmice - Family: Paridae	
Black-capped Chickadee	Parus atricapillus
Carolina Chickadee	Parus carolinensis
Tufted Titmouse	Parus bicolor
Nuthatches - Family: Sittidae	
White-breasted Nuthatch	Sitta carolinensis
Wrens - Family: Troglodytidae	
Carolina Wren	Thryothorus ludovicianus
House Wren	Troglodytes aedon
Winter Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes
Kinglets - Family: Regulidae	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Regulus satrapa

Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Gnatcatchers - Family: Muscicapidae	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>
Thrushes - Family: Turdidae	
Eastern Bluebird	<i>Sialia sialis</i>
Wood Thrush	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Mockingbirds & Thrashers - Family: Mimidae	
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>
Starling - Family: Sturnidae	
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Waxwings - Family: Bombycillidae	
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>
Warblers - Family: Parulidae	
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>
Blue-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora pinus</i>
Northern Parula	<i>Parula americana</i>
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>
Magnolia Warbler	<i>Dendroica magnolia</i>
Black-throated Blue Warbler	<i>Dendroica caerulescens</i>
Cerulean Warbler	<i>Dendroica cerulea</i>
Blackburnian Warbler	<i>Dendroica fusca</i>
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>
Prairie Warbler	<i>Dendroica discolor</i>
Palm Warbler	<i>Dendroica palmarum</i>

Bay-breasted Warbler	<i>Dendroica castanea</i>
Worm-eating Warbler	<i>Helminthos vermivora</i>
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>
Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapillus</i>
Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>
Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus motacilla</i>
Kentucky Warbler	<i>Oporornis formosus</i>
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>
Hooded Warbler	<i>Wilsonia citrina</i>
Yellow-breasted Chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>
Tanagers - Family: <i>Thraupidae</i>	
Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>
Scarlet Tanager	<i>Piranga olivacea</i>
Towhees & Sparrows - Family: <i>Emberizidae</i>	
Eastern Towhee	<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>
Field Sparrow	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>
Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>
Grosbeaks & Buntings - Family: <i>Cardinalidae</i>	

Northern Cardinal	Cardinalis cardinalis
Indigo Bunting	Passerina cyanea
Blackbirds & Orioles - Family: Icteridae	
Red-winged Blackbird	Agelaius phoeniceus
Eastern Meadowlark	Sturnella magna
Common Grackle	Quiscalus quiscula
Brown-headed Cowbird	Molothrus ater
Orchard Oriole	Icterus spurius
Baltimore Oriole	Icterus galbula
Finches - Family: Fringillidae	
Purple Finch	Carpodacus purpureus
House Finch	Carpodacus mexicanus
American Goldfinch	Carduelis tristis
Old World Sparrows - Family: Passeridae	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus

Butterflies

The Blue Ridge Center's extensive habitat variety provides an excellent venue for butterfly enthusiasts. The land preserve at the Blue Ridge Center is invaluable for butterflies because, unfortunately, many species are rapidly losing habitat because they are highly vulnerable to pesticide pollution, often suffering from agricultural sprayings and mass sprayings against gypsy moth infestations.

Butterflies were first surveyed at the Blue Ridge Center in 1998; species identified since then have been added to our inventory database. Currently, our butterfly list stands at about 60 species, notably including the gold-banded skipper. The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy holds an annual Loudoun County butterfly count every August, contributing greatly to butterfly conservation.



BUTTERFLY BASELINE INVENTORY

Swallowtails: Family Papilionoidea

Pipevine Swallowtail

Battus philenor

Zebra Swallowtail	<i>Eurytides marcellus</i>
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	<i>Papilio glaucus</i>
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (black form)	<i>Papilio glaucus</i>
Black Swallowtail	<i>Papilio polyxenes asterius</i>
Spicebush Swallowtail	<i>Papilio troilus troilus</i>
Sulphurs & Whites: Family Pieridae	
Cabbage White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
Clouded Sulphur	<i>Colias philodice philodice</i>
Orange Sulphur	<i>Colias eurytheme</i>
Gossamer-wing Butterflies: Family Lycaenidae	
Harvester	<i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>
American Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas americana</i>
Coral Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium titus mopsus</i>
Banded Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium calanus</i>
Striped Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium liparops strigosum</i>
Red-banded Hairstreak	<i>Calycopis cecrops</i>
Gray Hairstreak	<i>Strymon melinus</i>
Eastern-tailed Blue	<i>Everes comyntas</i>
Spring Azure	<i>Celatrina argiolus ladon</i>
Brush-footed Butterflies: Family Nymphalidae	
Snouts	
American Snout	<i>Libytheana carinenta bachmanii</i>
Heliconians & Fritillaries	
Variegated Fritillary	<i>Euptoieta claudia</i>
Great Spangled Fritillary	<i>Speyeria cybele cybele</i>
Meadow Fritillary	<i>Boloria bellona bellona</i>
True Brush-foots	
Pearl Crescent	<i>Phyciodes tharos</i>

Silvery Checkerspot	<i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>
Question Mark	<i>Polygona interrogationis</i>
Eastern Comma	<i>Polygona comma</i>
Mourning Cloak	<i>Nymphalis antiopa antiopa</i>
American Lady	<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta rubria</i>
Common Buckeye	<i>Junonia coenia</i>
Admirals & Relatives	
Red-spotted Purple	<i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>
Viceroy	<i>Limenitis archippus archippus</i>
Hackberries	
Hackberry Emperor	<i>Asterocampa celtis celtis</i>
Tawny Emperor	<i>Asterocampa clyton</i>
Satyrs & Wood Nymphs	
Northern Pearly-eye	<i>Enodia anthedon</i>
Little Wood Satyr	<i>Megisto cymela</i>
Common Wood Nymph	<i>Cercyonis pegala pegala</i>
Monarchs	
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>
Skippers: Family HesperIIDae	
Open-Winged Skippers	
Silver-spotted Skipper	<i>Epargyreus clarus</i>
Gold banded Skipper	<i>Autochton cellus</i>
Northern Cloudywing	<i>Thorybes phylades</i>
Southern Cloudywing	<i>Thorybes bathyllus</i>
Dreamy Duskywing	<i>Erynnis icelus</i>
Juvenal's Duskywing	<i>Erynnis juvenalis</i>

Horace's Duskywing	<i>Erynnis horatius</i>
Wild Indigo Duskywing	<i>Erynnis baptisiae</i>
Common Checkered Skipper	<i>Pyrgus communis communis</i>
Common Sootywing	<i>Pholisora catullus</i>
Branded Skippers	
Clouded Skipper	<i>Lerema accius</i>
Least Skipper	<i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i>
Fiery Skipper	<i>Hylephila phyleus</i>
Peck's Skipper	<i>Polites peckius</i>
Tawny-edged Skipper	<i>Polites themistocles</i>
Crossline Skipper	<i>Polites origenus</i>
Northern Broken-dash	<i>Wallengrenia egeremet</i>
Little Glassywing	<i>Pompeius verna verna</i>
Sachem	<i>Atalopedes campestris huron</i>
Zabulon Skipper	<i>Poanes zabulon</i>
Dun Skipper	<i>Euphyes vestris metacomet</i>

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Reptiles & Amphibians

The Blue Ridge Center offers excellent habitats for snakes, turtles, frogs, newts, toads and salamanders. Riparian habitats, rocky outcrops, seeps, historic structures, vernal pools, mulch piles and two fishless ponds are among the best environments. The streams, ponds, and wetlands of the Blue Ridge Center host a large number of reptiles and amphibians, including the Virginia-listed threatened wood turtle. Explore our trails and search for these species and more.

Did you know the Blue Ridge Center holds a Loudoun county record? In March of 2004, we found Marbled salamander. Thanks to Loudoun county high school students and Mike Hayslett of the Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center, they found 11 larvae. Mike says this find represents a county record for Loudoun (i.e., the first formally documented site of this species in the county) and a surprising find, being located along the Blue Ridge scarp versus the eastern end of the county, where more are expected. Another unexpected find was the Jefferson salamander. The discovery of this population represents the third known site for the county.

Amphibian/Reptile Baseline Inventory

Salamanders: Order Caudata

Newts: Family Salamandridae	
Red-spotted Newt	Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens
Lungless Salamanders: Family Plethodontidae	
Redback Salamander	Plethodon cinereus
Northern Dusky Salamander	Desmognathus fuscus
Slimy Salamander	Plethodon glutinosus
Seal Salamander	Desmognathus Monticola
Northern Two-lined Salamander	Eurycea bislineata
Northern Red Salamander	Pseudotriton ruber ruber
Frogs & Toads: Order Salientia	
True Frogs: Family Ranidae	
Green Frog	Rana clamitans melanota
Pickereel Frog	Rana palustris
Wood Frog	Rana sylvatica
Treefrogs: Family Hylidae	
Grey Tree Frog	Hyla versicolor or chrysoscelis
Spring Peeper	Pseudacris crucifer
True Toads: Family Bufonidae	
American Toad	Bufo americanus
Turtles: Order Chelonia	
Pond and Box Turtles: Family Emydidae	
Eastern Painted Turtle	Chrysemys picta picta
Wood Turtle	Clemmys insculpta
Eastern Box Turtle	Terrapene carolina carolina

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Fish

There are two primary streams on our land, Sweet Run and Piney Run, both of which contain a high diversity of fish for a small, first-order stream. Both streams are major drainages of the "Between the Hills" valley and lead north to the Potomac river. Water

quality analysis of these streams tells us that they are healthy and capable of supporting a wide variety of life.

Sweet Run contains seven species of fish: pumpkinseed, white sucker, creek chub, blunt nose minnow, black nose dace, long nose dace, and fantail darter. In addition to those seven species, Piney Run also contains blue gill, red-breasted sunfish, green sunfish, northern hogsucker, silverjaw minnow, yellow bullhead, margined madtom, largemouth bass, and common shiner. Fish in Sweet Run are less diverse due to its substantially colder water than Piney Run

Information in the table below was collected during the summers of 2000 and 2004.

Fish Baseline Inventory	
Minnows: Family Cyprinidae	
Silverjaw Minnow	<i>Ericymba buccata</i>
Common Shiner	<i>Luxilus cornutus</i>
Bluntnose Minnow	<i>Pimephales notatus</i>
Blacknose Dace	<i>Rhinichthys atratulus</i>
Longnose Dace	<i>Rhinichthys cataractae</i>
Creek Chub	<i>Semotilus atromaculatus</i>
Suckers: Family Catostomidae	
White Sucker	<i>Catostomus commersoni</i>
Northern Hog Sucker	<i>Hypentelium nigricans</i>
Bullheads & Catfish: Family Ictaluridae	
Yellow Bullhead	<i>Ameiurus natalis</i>
Margined Madtom	<i>Noturus insignis</i>
Sunfishes & Basses: Family Centrarchidae	
Redbreast Sunfish	<i>Lepomis auritus</i>
Green Sunfish	<i>Lepomis cyanellus</i>
Pumpkinseed	<i>Lepomis gibbosus</i>
Bluegill	<i>Lepomis macrochirus</i>
Black crappie	<i>Pomoxis nigromaculatus</i>
Largemouth Bass	<i>Micropterus salmoides</i>
Darters & Perches: Family Percidae	
Fantail Darter	<i>Etheostoma flabellare</i>

