



Chickadee Chatter

Volume 6 Issue 2

The Newsletter of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society

April 2007

Dear Members:

It's finally Spring! Why is it that even though the severity and duration of this Winter were less than normal, it seemed so much worse? I guess that mild January spoiled us so that when Winter finally decided to rear it's ugly head in February, it was much harder to take than usual. I'm sure most of you share my relief and enthusiasm for the freshness of a new season and, with it, the opportunity to enjoy some great birding opportunities together with lots of other enjoyable outdoor activities.

Some of you may not know that the APAS has it's very own living treasure - Lee Tosh, who is Martha Stewart, Rachael Ray and Julia Child all rolled into one! I am excited to announce that Lee has graciously agreed to make occasional contributions to *Chickadee Chatter* in the form of some of her wonderful recipes. In this issue we are introducing Lee's new column -*The Chatting Gourmet*, and her first recipe - Everything Cookies, which many of you have already tasted up on the mountain or at the annual picnic. Now you can make as many as you want right at home.

In the last several issues of *Chickadee Chatter*, Rosemary McGlynn has mentioned that the APAS has limited edition prints for sale for a nominal donation. The print, entitled *Return to Penn's Woods*, is of a lone Peregrine perched on a branch above a river gorge. I purchased this print and had it framed, and I want you to know that it is truly beautiful. If you've been tempted to order one from Rosemary, I encourage you to do so. You will love it and the proceeds certainly go to a great project - our very own Golden Eagles.

Keep your eyes to the sky!



Ev Merriman, Editor

Chickadee Chatter

Green Energy and Wind Turbines



Many local people are wondering why our Audubon chapter has taken such an adversarial position on this form of green energy. The answer is - regulations. Whenever big corporations come into an area, it is exceedingly important that they be sensitive to both human and non-human issues. For instance, when coal companies started mining in Pennsylvania we had no regulations. Today we're paying the price in cleaning up polluted streams and reclaiming stripmines. Some streams and stripmines will never be reclaimed. With the wind industry, we have no tough, enforceable regulations that will protect wildlife, let alone human health issues. The wildlife issues are the red flag waved in the face of Audubon. With wildlife, proper sighting of the wind turbines away from migration corridors and bat hibernacula is essential.

Jeff Payne sent out the first warnings about the unregulated wind industry as a developing problem. When the Somerset County Commissioners set up a wind collaborative, Jeff, together with other APAS with members Dennis McNair, Rosemary McGlynn and Che Mincone, attended those meetings. The Harrisburg Wind Collaborative had already sent out a model ordinance which, at best, was very unfriendly to both wildlife and humans. Townships could either accept

(continued on Page 2)

Inside This Issue

Recent Outings Revisited.....	2
Calendar of Events.....	3
Let's Keep the Eagles Flying.....	5
The Chatting Gourmet.....	5



(Green Energy continued from Page 1)

the model or they could produce tougher regulations. In time, Sally Dick, Kim Moore, Tom Dick and others in addition to the above mentioned members began attending the tedious township meetings. The issues were either too complicated for the township supervisors or they feared wind company lawsuits.

With mounting frustration, we contacted the Governor's office about a meeting. It was our feeling that Harrisburg was unaware as to what was happening locally. On March 6 a group composed of members Laura Jackson, founder of SOAR (Save our Allegheny Ridges), Kim Moore, and Sally and Tom Dick visited

with Governor Rendell, Lance Simmons (Top Aide to the Governor), and Kerry Campbell of the Department of Environmental Protection. As a result, Lance Simmons will come to our area to attend a township meeting. This is to reinforce to township supervisors that they can make ordinances tougher without fear of lawsuits. We were also asked to send written information to the Governor on the causes of problems and our recommendations for solutions. We are also to be included on two of the Harrisburg wind committees. Let's hope they not only listen but act as well.



Tom Dick

Recent Outings Revisited

Jan. 28 and Feb. 4: Winter Raptor Bedford Surveys

The two winter raptor surveys conducted in January and February produced good numbers of overwintering Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers and American Kestrels. However, no Rough-legged hawks were found. The Rough-legs were generally not reported in the many counts conducted throughout the state until late February when they appeared suddenly and throughout the state. No good explanation is available.

Feb. 11: Winter Nature at Shawnee State Park

Cancelled due to bad weather.

Feb. 25: Spring Hawk Watch

February and March are lonely times for the counters since the weather keeps most visitors away. The road and hawk watch lane had to be plowed five times due to our late winter storms, and more than a few days of weather eliminated the count altogether. As of March 18 we have 362 raptors including 46 Golden Eagles and 3 Bald Eagles.

Mar. 15: Steve Johnson's Program on Alaska

Steve presented a fabulous program on his solo road trip from Sunbury, Pa. to the Arctic Ocean. His most memorable slide was of a number of swings of his butterfly net and the heavy accumulated weight of Arctic mosquitoes.

Mar. 18: Wetland Waterfowl Count

A late, cold winter kept impoundments frozen at Dunnings Creek Wetland Sanctuary until March 18 when a partial opening began in all the impoundments.

What a great first day!!! I encourage members to accompany me no matter whether you know a duck from an owl or just to enjoy the scene. In order of encounter, we saw Canada Geese, Northern Pintails, Hooded Mergansers, Mallards, Ring-necked Ducks, Greater Scaup, Black Ducks, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwalls, Wood Ducks, Pied-billed Grebes, Horned Grebes, Tundra Swan, Great Blue Herons, Killdeer, Swamp Sparrows, Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers, Kestrels, Coots, and Meadowlarks. The total number of waterfowl came to 800 individuals with a Spring record of 205 Wood Ducks.

Mar. 18: Bluebird Trail and Wood Duck Boxes

Cancelled due to heavy snow. To be rescheduled.

Special Note: Spring planting at Dunnings Creek Wetlands will replace our Quemahoning Earth Day Celebration this year. Maintenance is required on our Dunnings Creek Wetland Sanctuary every eight years. We have many jobs such as removing invasive plants in switch grass fields, planting new impoundments, creating potholes in Farm Creek for aquatic invertebrates, restoration of our Purple Martin House, repairing muskrat damage, planting millet fields, planting trees and shrubs, plus other odds and ends. We need lots of people and we offer a grand potluck lunch at the barn. In previous years at the same time we've seen good wildlife such as Bald Eagles, Osprey fishing the impoundments, Rails, Bitterns, and land critters such as mink and muskrat. If you can, let us know if you plan to attend. Bring a friend and children are welcome, too.



Tom Dick



2007 Calendar of Events

PROGRAMS

Programs are held at 7:00 p.m. in the Engineering and Science Bldg., Room 200, UPJ on the third Thursday of Sept., Oct., Nov., Mar., Apr. and May.

Note: The Earth Day Celebration at Quemahoning Dam will be replaced this year with a work day at Dunnings Creek Wetlands.

Apr. 19: Mike Gannon on "Bats of Pennsylvania." Our speaker is from the Altoona campus of Penn State. He has published extensively and is an excellent speaker. He will introduce us to the many bat species of Pa., their behavior and the effect of wind turbines on bat populations. Come learn more about these fascinating mammals.

May 17: Greg Turner, a research biologist from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, will discuss the little known mammal known as the Allegheny Woodrat. This secretive little mammal is an endangered species in Pennsylvania, yet we have them on some of our wilder forested ridges within our counties. They are both fascinating and rapidly disappearing. Attend this exciting meeting.

Sept. 20: Mike Lanzone, asst. coordinator of the 2nd Pa. Breeding Bird Atlas and ornithologist from Powdermill Avian Research Center, will discuss the new technology of bioacoustics as a powerful method for studying night

migration. Learn how Powdermill is expanding our knowledge of migration and using these tools for conservation, and how you can get involved.

Oct. 18: Todd Katzner on Imperial Eagles in Russia. Todd is an Eagle researcher and head of the Golden Eagle Project at the Allegheny Front. He will describe the new technology for tracking eagles and its importance to conservation biology. Todd's project at the Allegheny Front is drawing attention throughout the state and he will also discuss this project. His project is extremely exciting, so make sure you don't miss the meeting.

Nov. 15: Yellowstone: the Wolf Reintroduction Program. Join several members as they relive their Yellowstone adventures. Tom and Deb Bodenschatz, Rosemary McGlynn, Karen Jackson, Lee Tosh and Sally Dick will share photos and memories, and discuss the wolf reintroduction program. We will also have sector information to hand out on the upcoming CBC.

OUTINGS

Feb. 25-May 10: Spring Hawk Count: Only a few hawk watches have a Spring count and we're one of them. As always, everyone is welcome - the more eyes to the sky, the more birds we'll count.

Feb. to Apr.: Wetland Waterfowl Counts: Spring is the best time for seeing the return of all the ducks and geese. We will be making two to three counts per week and members are welcome to accompany us. The locations will be Dunnings Creek Wetlands and Shawnee State Park. Call Tom Dick at 814-754-5727 or Rosemary McGlynn at 814-255-5734.

Apr. 21 and possibly 22nd: Dunnings Creek Wetlands Earth Day Celebration: Celebrate this wonderful planet by joining us at the wetlands for plantings, working on jackdams, repairing muskrat damage, general cleanup, planting fields of millet, and lots more. In the past we had over 50 people pitch in for wildlife. Lunch will be a covered dish picnic in Jerry Fetters' barn. Bring your binoculars and boots, shovels, and gloves for a fun-filled work/learning/play day. Frequently we see Ospreys, Rails, Bitterns and other wetland birds. Primitive camping overnight will be permitted at Dunnings Creek Wetlands. Call Tom Dick at 814-754-5727.

Apr. 22: Ephemeral Spring Flowers in Bedford: Continue the celebration of Earth Week by joining us for a wildflower excursion near the wetlands following the last of the wetlands plantings. Call Sally Dick at 814-754-5727.

May 12: Migratory Bird Count: This is one of our annual surveys, and it's a wonderful time to see the warblers and other songbirds as they migrate. It's also a great time to brush up on bird song identification, and prepare for the Breeding Bird Atlas. We cover Bedford County in groups and it's a lot of fun. Contact: Tom Dick at 814-754-5727.

May 20 and 26: Shorebird Outing at Dunnings Creek: This is the time for water drawdown to expose mudflats for shorebirds. They come in waves every few days, but we've had over 20 species during the Spring including Phalaropes. There are only a few places in the state where water is rolled back for the advent of shorebirds. If you are interested, call Tom Dick at 814-754-5727.

May 25 to Aug.: Breeding Bird Survey: We have lots of blocks left to be done so we can use all the volunteers we can get. If you're a beginner, you are more than welcome and it's a great opportunity to learn both field biology and birding. There is no better opportunity to learn about bird song, species, and nesting habitats. Call Neil Woffinden at 814-467-5738.

June 9: Children's Outing: Butterflies and Bugs: Join us for a family oriented outing to share the wonder of nature with children of all ages. Bring children, grandchildren, neighborhood kids. The outings are designed to introduce kids in a gentle way to nature through forest walks, streams and ponds. Leaders: Sally Dick, Kelly Warshel, and Kim Moore. Call 814-754-5727 for details.



June 16: Bioblitz in Clear Shade Natural Area: Living up to our mission statement of biodiversity, we will begin to assess plants, butterflies, dragonflies, and herps in a 24 hour period. This will be a special experience for novices and experts alike, and an important contribution to the scientific community. Of course, no one will be there 24 hours, but the night shift will identify moths and bats. This outing is open to novices and experts alike, so join us on a fast learning curve. Contact Tom Dick.

June 24: Dragonflies and Freshwater Mussel Assessment: Join us to identify our beautiful dragonflies and delicate damselflies. Dunnings Creek Wetlands is usually the area of focus, but we also do the local bogs, streams, seeps, lakes and ponds. This will be our first attempt at determining numbers and species of mussels in rivers in Bedford County. Come prepared to wade in streams. Call Dennis McNair at 814-255-4088 or Tom Dick.

July 8: North American Butterfly Count: Similar to the Christmas Bird Count, this is a function of the North American Butterfly Association (NABA). It is open to everyone interested in learning about butterflies. The number of species last year was 47 with over 2,000 individuals. This count provides valuable information on butterfly distributions, and we've added 15 new species to Bedford County. We have car routes and specific locations, and we are always looking for new participants. Call Tom Dick or Rosemary McGlynn.

July 21: Children's Outing: The second outing for children (check June 9). Locations may vary. Call for details.

July 22: Dragonflies: Similar to first outing except locations may change. Call Dennis McNair for details (check June 24 outing).

Aug. 12: Annual Picnic: Gather at Hidden Acres Farm for a covered dish, outings, and camaraderie. This event signals the end of summer and is a great time to meet new members and enjoy the often more than 100 people attending. We will have outings for children and adults.

Aug. 15 to Dec. 15: Fall Hawk Watch: Join up with members and visitors (4,000/yr) and settle back to enjoy the great view and migrating hawks and eagles. The Allegheny Front is well known throughout the Eastern U.S. Excellent and friendly counters and good organization keep the site active.

Oct. 5 to 12: Hawkwatching in Veracruz, Mexico: Veracruz is a coastal port that hosts the migration of all of the hawks of North America that winter in Central and South America. It is also an opportunity to see many of the Mexican songbirds. This tour is set to coincide with the peak of fall migration in Veracruz, while visits to tropical rainforest, pine-oak woodlands, fog-shrouded humid forest, coastal mangroves and other habitats will provide us with an excellent introduction to the birds of Mexico. Call Tom Dick soon to reserve your space.

Dec. 16: Christmas Bird Count: This is an adventurous way to spend a December day. At the end of a vigorous day of bird counting we meet at Hidden Acres Farm for a covered dish and tally. It is not only fun for experienced and beginning birders, but the information obtained is extremely important for determining trends in bird populations. This past year we had over 10,000 individuals and 70 species. A great way to learn your birds! Contact Tom Dick.

 Tom Dick

The Golden Eagle Project at the Allegheny Front



Jim Rocco Photos



Let's Keep the Eagles Flying

Migration time is here again and the researchers from Powdermill and the National Aviary will be continuing the Golden Eagle study at the Allegheny Front. We wish them great success and hope to see more GEs being released at the hawk watch this year. What an exciting thing happening right at our own watch! Interest in this important project has been amazing and continued financial support is vital to provide equipment and sustained monitoring over several years.

Here are several suggestions for anyone who wishes to contribute to project funding:

1. Make a donation to "APAS", specifying the funds for the GE Project.
2. Purchase a hawk watch cookbook, *Cooking on the Front Burner*, for \$10.00. The proceeds will go directly to the project.

3. The Chapter has 18 signed/numbered peregrine falcon prints entitled *Return to Penn's Woods* by wildlife artist Mark Anderson. The print image is 16" x 23". A donation of \$30.00 or more for a print will go entirely to the GE research.

Donations made payable to "APAS" and book/print orders can be sent to Rosemary McGlynn at 1 Denali Lane, Johnstown, PA 15905; 814-255-5734; denali@atlanticbb.net.

Books and prints will also be available at chapter meetings and at the Earth Day outing on April 21. Let's do all we can to support this project. And don't forget to check up on "our" eagles at the aviary website: www.aviary.org/csr/eaglePA.php.

We would like to thank the Westmont Garden Club for a \$50 donation and the Wal-Mart Foundation for a \$250 donation.

 Rosemary McGlynn

The Chatting Gourmet

Our first recipe has become known as **Everything Cookies**. They are basically an oatmeal cookie with as much good stuff as you may want to put in it.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 3 C. oats (quick or old-fashioned) | 1 C. brown sugar |
| 1 C. flour | ½ C. white sugar |
| 1 tsp. salt | 1 egg |
| ½ tsp. baking soda | ¼ C. water |
| ¾ C. butter flavored shortening | 1 tsp. vanilla |

Add a small handful of any or all of the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Raisins or currants | Dried cherries or blueberries |
| Dried sweetened cranberries | Chopped almonds |
| Dried pineapple, chopped | Coconut |
| Dried apricots, chopped | Chocolate chips |
| Walnuts, chopped | |



Grease cookie sheet. Combine dry ingredients. Beat together shortening, sugars, egg, water and vanilla. Add dry ingredients, then fruit and nuts. Preheat oven to 350°. Using a medium sized cookie scoop (it looks like an ice cream scoop), or by spoonful drop onto cookie sheet. With wet hands, flatten slightly and smooth edges to keep fruit and nuts attached to cookie batter. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until slightly browned on the edges. Cool for 4 minutes before removing from cookie sheet.

If there is a recipe that's not in our cookbook that you would like to see, tell somebody at the hawk watch and it will eventually get to me.

 Lee Toshi

Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society
1003 Eisenhower Blvd.
Johnstown, PA 15904

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Johnstown, PA
Permit #5



Contact the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society at: wetmeadow@aol.com
or visit us on the web at: alleghenyplateauaudubon.org

Vice President - Dennis McNair
Corresponding Secretary - Sally Dick
Fundraising - Rosemary McGlynn
Conservation/Activism - Jeff Payne
Hospitality - Wanetta Escherich
IBA Coordinator - Neil Woffinden
Nature Photography - Dave Escherich

President - Tom Bodenschatz
Recording Secretary - Shirley Houston
Treasurer - Retta Payne
Programs and Outings - Tom Dick, et.al.
Newsletter Editor - Ev Merriman
Hawkwatch Compiler - Che Mincone
Sanctuaries - Tom Dick
Membership - Bob Stewart

Officers

The APAS was founded in 1984. We are dedicated to protection and understanding of the earth and all its inhabitants. Through our series of meetings, programs, and outings, we hope to reach individuals of all ages to understand, respect, and protect the earth.

Through such activities as the Breeding Bird Survey, raptor counts, the Christmas Bird Count, and outings, members can do field work and learn first-hand about the wonders of nature.

Our Allegheny Front Hawk Watch count has become an important tradition over the past decade. We have 10 dedicated counters who cover the site daily during the Spring and Fall migration seasons. Currently we are participating in an important research project in cooperation with Powdermill Nature Reserve and Carnegie Mellon University to band Golden Eagles as they fly our ridges.

We also maintain the Dunning's Creek Wetlands, a Wetlands Restoration Project. Interest in local bogs, wetlands, and riverine habitats has led us to promote outings such as the annual Butterfly Count, dragonfly outings, and more recently, family outings to encourage the involvement of children.

Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society
Mission Statement