

Fall 2016 Newsletter

Web Version

Chickadee Chatter

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Membership use only

From the President

Time is a funny thing—we want it to come, but when it does, we wish it would slow down. We long for the summer, only to then long for the fall. When the fall comes, accompanied by very cold weather, we can't wait for spring. Unfortunately at the hawk watch, spring is slow, so we long for summer, until we get there and remember that nothing is migrating.

Regardless of our perception, we often overlook that right now is the best of times. It is only when looking back at old photos or rehashing stories that we understand that now is as good as it gets. Events, outings, and meetings are difficult to make in this chaotic world we live in, but missing events with friends and acquaintances is really wasting time.

The annual workday at the hawkwatch is a perfect example. No one gets excited about a workday. But for those who showed up, it turned out to be a great day of fun. Similarly, the NABA Butterfly Count was an excellent time to meet new members and specialists. Even the APAS meeting, where procedures and logistics must be hashed out turned out to be an informative, celebratory, and jovial gathering.

The point is this—the next time you try to predict if you will have a positive experience at an outing—don't! Just show up! You will probably be pleasantly surprised. And if you missed the picnic, what were you thinking? Music, food, art, good people, and beautiful weather were only topped by gracious and welcoming hosts.

So, get out and get active! I promise, it will be worth the time.

Photo by Jeanine Ging



Bob Stewart and Meadow Ging-Wargo are waiting for the hawks to return.

Brian M. Wargo

NABA Butterfly Count at APAS - 2016

Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society members participated in the National American Butterfly Association's butterfly count on July 10, 2016. You may ask, "Why are Audubon members interested in butterflies?" The answer is that members of both societies are fundamentally interested in conservation. If habitat is hospitable for butterflies, then birds may also benefit, and vice versa.



Photo by Jeanine Ging

Meadow receiving instructions from Walt Shaffer and Tom Dick.

There is also overlap in identification practices—both look at patterns in morphology, behavior, and gerontology (aging).

This year's participants included novices and experts, the very young and the less than young, all wearing smiles as they sought out the beautiful flying insects. The "butterfly" of the day, at least for Meadow Ging-Wargo, was the giant Cecropia Moth, caught by Walt Shaffer shown in the picture to the left. (Notice the smiles!)

Participants met at Hidden Acres Farm for the compilation of the data and a picnic style dinner. Everyone exchanged stories and more importantly, met some new friends. Sally Dick, the official compiler, reports the following results (see opposite page).



Photo by Jeanine Ging

The combination of food and friends during the compilation of butterfly numbers.

Participants: George Bercik, Pauline Petrucci, Rosemary McGlynn, Brian M. Wargo, Jeanine Ging, Meadow and Theo Ging-Wargo, Tom and Sally Dick, Todd Eibh, Curt Lehman, Denise Lehman, Bill Zemaitis, Wendy Fastings, Walt and Dave Shaffer

Thanks to all of the participants! We hope to see you next year!

Butterfly Numbers

Pipevine Swallowtail	2	Gray Comma	2
Black Swallowtail	9	American Lady	3
Eastern tiger Swallowtail	28	Painted Lady	1
Spicebush Swallowtail	13	Red Admiral	2
Cabbage White	203	Common Buckeye	3
Clouded Sulfur	75	Northern Pearly-eye	18
Orange Sulfur	20	Common Wood Nymph	104
Little Yellow	2	Appalachian Brown	20
American Copper	2	Little Wood Satyr	2
Coral Hairstreak	3	Monarch	8
Striped Hairstreak	2	Silver Spotted	108
Gray Hairstreak	1	Wild Indigo Dustywing	4
Hickory Hairstreak	1	Least	3
Eastern Tailed Blue	11	European	34
Summer Azure	29	Peck's Skipper	20
Spring Azure	1	Long Dash	1
Great Spangled Fritillary	383	Northern Broken Dash	20
Aphrodite	69	Little Glassywing	13
Atlantis	8	Dun Skipper	23
Meadow Fritillary	3	hobomok	4
Varigated Fritillary	9	Delaware Skipper	3
Pearl Crescent	81	Black Dash	1
Silvery Checkerspot	3	Zabulon	2
Eastern Comma	2		
Total Species	47	Total Number	1369

Kittatinny Roundtable 2016

On Saturday, July 23rd, the Kittatinny Roundtable 2016 meeting was held at Hawk Mountain's Acopian Center for Conservation Learning. The annual meeting of hawkwatchers from across Pennsylvania and surrounding states, came to discuss hawk migration.

This year's speakers included an Allegheny Front Hawk Watch regular, Paul Fritz, who gave an excellent program on his years hawkwatching at Gunsight Mountain in Alaska.

Carolyn Hoffman from Hawk Migration of Association of North America (HMANA) spoke of the need for funding hawkwatching in general as well as for HMANA's new Center for Hawk Migration in Detroit.

Chelsea Johnston, a college student at Kutztown University, presented a Kittatinny Raptor Health Study using Little Gap Hawk Watch data.

After lunch, Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society's own Brian M. Wargo presented his book, "Bird!": An Exploration of Hawkwatching.

Nick Bolgiano then spoke of his research on Red-tailed Hawk migration and wintering.

Laurie Goodrich gave a presentation on Broad-winged Hawk migration using Telemetry.

Erin Brown, the education director at Hawk Mountain then gave a rundown of all the services provided by Hawk Mountain.

Those gathered then took time to look at both spring and fall hawk migration data. Many sites participated in the fall count, but Allegheny Front Hawk Watch was only one of three at the meeting to have counted in the spring. This shows how vital Allegheny Front Hawk Watch is for providing spring data.

All hawk watches expressed concern for their future, citing the lack of personnel to replace retiring hawk counters, the lack of volunteers at the sites, decreasing numbers of spotters, and lower visitor numbers. The discussion then turned to the long term sites that are simply no longer manned, including Allegheny Front's neighbor Tuscarora Summit.

The meeting was a great place to meet some new hawkwatchers, exchange stories, and learn from one another. All APAS members should consider attending a Kittatinny Roundtable meeting in the future.

Workday at the Hawkwatch

August 4th turned out to be a perfect day for working at the hawkwatch. The weather was cool and pleasant. Here are some highlights in picture form:



Photo by Jeanine Ging

Che Mincone hacks down the thick stuff.



Photo by Jeanine Ging

Jim Rocco designing a new log bench.

Theo Ging-Wargo skeptically watching Joe Sabo, Jeanine Ging, Jack Julian, Brian M. Wargo, and Bob Stewart position the eagle base.



Photo by Meadow Ging-Wargo

Audubon Picnic at Hidden Acres Farm

The Audubon picnic signifies that time of year when birds begin thinking about migrating. In order to keep ahead of them, birders get together to stuff themselves with delicious homemade goodies, listen to some live music, and motivate one another for the upcoming season.



Joe and Barb Carrier enjoy the day.

The gracious host - Sally Dick.

Mike and Laura Jackson sit near an art display.



All photos by Jeanine Ging

More Picnic Pictures



Dick Akers chats with Dennis McGlynn.

Deb Bodenschatz is up and moving again!

Janet Kuehl is tempted by Ed's wine.

Live music was enjoyed by all.



Somerset Lake Update

by Jeff Payne (Vice-President of APAS)

Long known as a premier birding hotspot, with over 250 species, Somerset Lake was identified as an unsafe high hazard dam and water was drawn down in 2012.

The Somerset County Conservancy, with help from Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society, formed a subcommittee called Somerset Lake Action Committee (SLAC) in 2013. The good news is that SLAC, with grant support from many citizens and businesses and in partnership with governmental agencies and our elected officials, has secured funding for dam replacement to start this Fall. In addition, Somerset Lake Nature Park has been established as a County Park on the uplands around the Lake to insure good management and public access and recreation.

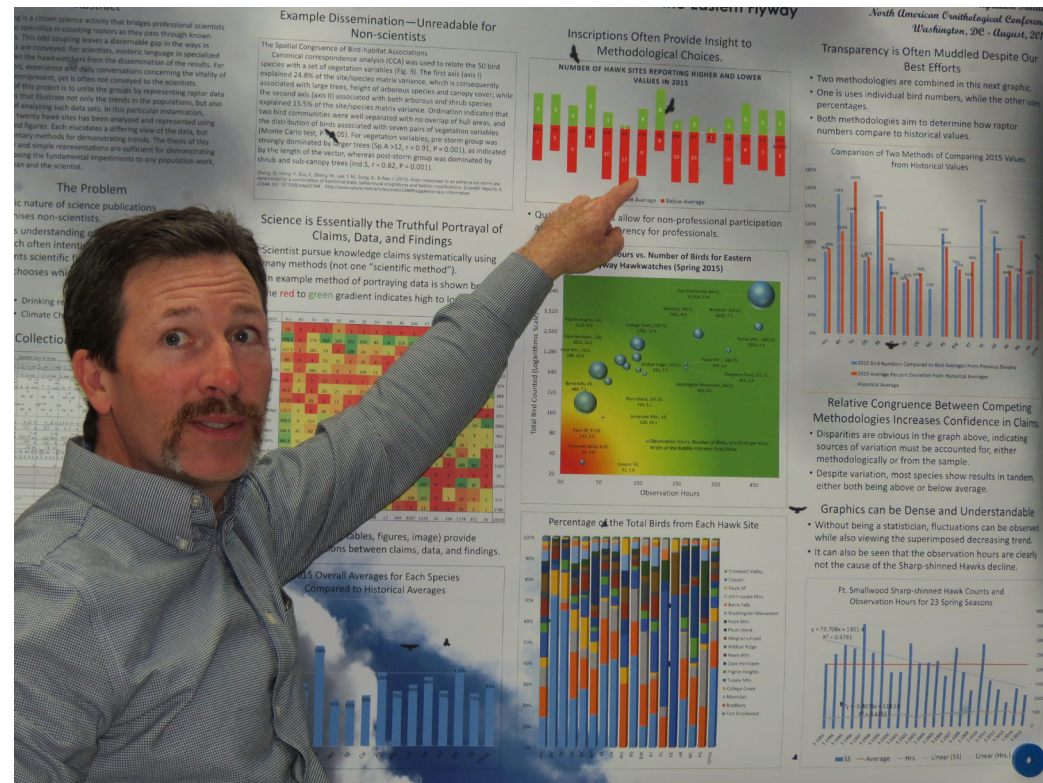
Somerset Lake Nature Park and a refurbished Somerset Lake should be an asset for outdoor loving residents and visitors for years to come.

Editor's note: Dr. Payne has been instrumental in the Somerset County Conservancy and should be commended for his stewardship concerning environmental issues at Somerset Lake.



Shorebirds at Somerset Lake.

North American Ornithological Conference In D.C.



The North American Ornithological Conference (NAOC) was officially the largest gathering of ornithologists ever recorded. Thousands gathered for the meeting in Washington, D.C. where hundreds presented research ranging from genomics to ecological destruction. Almost every major ornithological and birding society was present. This included the National Audubon Society, which hosted several events, including a Climate Change Reception/Social. Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society (APAS) was represented at the both the reception and the NAOC conference with the attendance of the APAS's president, Brian M. Wargo.

In addition to schmoozing with the National Audubon officers, Dr. Wargo also presented his analysis, entitled, *Using Inscriptions to Bridge Birders and Scientists: A Detailed Analysis of Two Competing Methodologies to Delineate Raptor Populations In the Eastern Flyway* (shown in the picture above). Wargo also attended several round table meetings pertaining to hawk migration, including wind turbine siting, electric power design, and tower placement. Despite the exhausting schedule, the historic heat wave in D.C., and travel lag, Wargo stated the conference was invigorating.

Outings and Events

August 15 - December 30 - Fall Hawkwatching and Eagle Counting

The Allegheny Front Hawk Watch provides incredible views of the migrating raptors and is one of the most important ridges for the Eastern Golden Eagle. A total of 17 species of raptors have been reported over the years. East winds are usually the best days, but you can never tell what will be flying!

October 2, 2016 - Audubon Picnic at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch

One of the best events of the year for APAS members. Bring your own drinks, a covered dish, and lawn chair or blanket, and binoculars. A great way to celebrate the fall foliage and reacquaint with fellow members.

October 2, 2016 - Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society Fall Meeting

The fall meeting will coincide with the Audubon Picnic. Please arrive at 9:30 a.m. for the 10:00 a.m. meeting which will be held at the hawkwatch. If needed, the meeting can be moved indoors, depending on the weather and our need for audio/visual equipment.

Oct. to Nov. - Owl Banding at the Hawk Watch

Dave Darney, the official bander of the APAS, will be banding Saw-whet Owls on weekends this fall. Members can help with this outing by tending to the nets. Dress warm, bring a folding chair, and a flashlight. Enjoy your nocturnal experience! Park along Lambert Mountain Road and walk in the lane. Banding starts around 7:00 pm. Late night helpers are particularly valuable on busy nights. Banding usually starts early in October and extends into the first part of November. Be sure to check our website and twitter feed before coming out.

December 18, 2016 - Christmas Bird Count

The APAS's annual Christmas Bird Count will be here soon! Our 15-mile diameter "Johnstown-circle" extends from Somerset Lake, north to above Quemahoning Reservoir. Team members will scour one (or more) of the eight sectors, counting all the birds encountered during that day. Most sectors already have a leader, but a few sectors remain unfilled. New members can be paired with experience folks, so anyone interested is encouraged to participate. We meet after dark at a local Somerset restaurant for food and to compile the count. This event is filled with birds, comradary, and food. Contact Jeff Payne at paynemt@gmail.com by the beginning of December if you can participate.

2016-2017 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER

Yearly Membership - September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017

www.alleghenyplateauaudubon.org

Please complete this form (or print one from our website) with your check and mail to:

Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society
c/o Bob Stewart
257 Krings St.
Johnstown, PA 15904

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

County _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone H or C () _____

e-mail _____

You will receive occasional news bulletins and event reminders by email or twitter.

The Chickadee Chatter newsletter will be sent to you either through e-mail or snail mail (email saves on paper and postage).

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP ONLY (make checks payable to: Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society)

_____ I am a new member- chapter only (\$15 check)

_____ I am renewing my membership- chapter only (\$15 check)

_____ I am including a donation to the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society

Amount of donation \$ _____