

Volume 3 Number 1 March 1986

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Christmas Bird Counts get better every year! The one on Saturday, December 28, 1985, was so good that the home of Tom and Sally Dick was lit up with happy smiles as the birders returned at the end of the day for the tally party. The total count of individual birds of 19,948 was well over last year's 16,861; and 62 species was also over last year's total of 52 species. The 68 species in the count week compared with 59 last year and 69 in 1983.

Low temperatures, slippery streets and roads, snow from 1-18", and gusty winds in the higher elevations were not ideal conditions, but the 58 hardy volunteers put in a full day of birding. Ron Rovansek was so keyed up by his stint on the crow count near Stackhouse Park that he ended the day with a two-hour owling trip. He and his team made the highest species count of 9,424 crows as they came in to roost.

Evening Grosbeaks were the most talked-about species because all teams found them plentiful at home feeders, resulting in a total of 1,180 for the day. What a contrast this was to last year's total of exactly zero! This turned out to be the only indication that the predicted finch invasion from the north was more than an illusion. Expecting to see Pine Grosbeaks and Crossbills, we had to settle for 4 Pine Siskins, 95 Am. Goldfinches and the Grosbeaks for our "invasion".

The waterfowl count was very good, especially on Quemahoning Dam, where open water provided a resting place for migrating species. With 950 Mallards heading the list of 17 waterfowl species, the dams and lakes contributed well to the total count.

There's no way to analyze results of bird counts precisely, but we always try

anyway. Some obvious factors contributing to the good results were more observers, the enthusiastic attitude of the participants, more experience, concentration on covering good habitat, more hours spent on feeder watches, and snow cover and clear skies for good spotting of birds. Add some points for timing and luck, and use the following 3-year statistics to draw your own conclusions. Every statistic has a story behind it to be long remembered by those who teamed up to make this count such a success. For such a good job, we thank the following: Richard A. & Richard D. Akers, Cindy Alt, Doris Brown, Bruce Courter, Janice Day, Chris, Sally & Tom Dick, Dave & Wanetta Escherich, Kevin George, Matt GoTias, Rosalind Gordon, Ann, Joe & Pat Gregorchik, Margaret Haines, Neil Harvey, Greg Hay, Henry & Velva Idzkowsky, Donald Kreutzberger, Dave, Greg & Joan Lohr, Albert Long, Albert Mall, Tracy Marchini, Iris Marr, James Mayer, Dave Mikesic, Dick Mock, Richard Murphy, Jim Rocco, Wayne Rosenberger, Nancy, Ron & Wendy Rovansek, Glenn & Ruth Sager, Michael & Noreen Sankovich, Jill VanScoyoc, Linda Sell, Paul Sheesley, Stanwyn Shetler, Betty Stephey, Lisa Stuchlak, Eric & Eileen Stuver, Barbara Sullivan, Bob Thompson, Gill Weakland, George, Patrick, Michael & Betty Wolfe (Team leaders underscored).

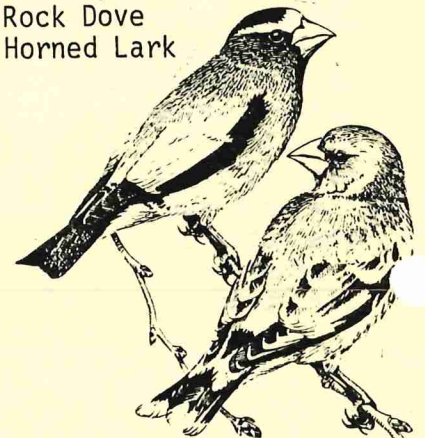
1983	1984	1985	
5	1	2	Com. Loon
5	0	0	Horned Grebe
1*	8	9	Pied-billed Grebe
1*	0	1	Great Blue Heron
1*	0	0	Tundra Swan
9	0	2	Mute Swan
9	1	37	Canada Goose
1*	0	1	Wood Duck
1	0	0	Green-winged Teal
8	8	17	Am. Black Duck
538	277	950	Mallard
3	7	0	N. Pintail
0	1	0	Am. Wigeon
5	3	15	Canvasback
0	0	4	Redhead

1983	1984	1985		1983	1984	1985	
0	1	1*	Ring-necked Duck	32	19	8	Cedar Waxwing
0	0	15	Lesser Scaup	982	1193	620	Eur. Starling
6	1*	1*	Com. Goldeneye	115	99	185	N. Cardinal
13	9	1	Bufflehead	0	1	1	Rufous-sided Towhee
1	5	7	Hooded Merganser	86	41	163	Am. Tree Sparrow
0	1	1	Com. Merganser	4	11	10	Field Sparrow
0	2	0	Red-breasted Merganser	1	0	1	Fox Sparrow
0	13	2	Ruddy Duck	31	17	41	Song Sparrow
0	2	0	N. Harrier	2	0	0	Swamp Sparrow
1	1*	6	Sharp-shinned Hawk	25	104	32	White-throated Sparrow
4	0	2	Cooper's Hawk	0	0	1*	White-crowned Sparrow
1	2	0	N. Goshawk	0	6	0	Sparrow, sp.
4	18	18	Red-tailed Hawk	246	249	544	Dark-eyed Junco
0	1	0	Bueto, sp.	3	0	1*	Red-winged Blackbird
0	1*	0	Rough-legged Hawk	0	1*	1	Com. Grackle
7	8	7	Am. Kestrel	0	0	12	Brown-headed Cowbird
0	0	2	Hawk, sp.	97	84	42	Purple Finch
2	5	1	Ring-necked Pheasant	270	268	456	House Finch
2	13	5	Ruffed Grouse	14	0	0	Com. Redpoll
0	0	5	Wild Turkey	7	0	4	Pine Siskin
1*	0	6	Am. Coot	103	31	95	Am. Goldfinch
0	0	10	Ring-billed Gull	68	0	1180	Evening Grosbeak
228	246	352	Rock Dove	410	930	496	House Sparrow
56	78	174	Mourning Dove				
1*	0	2	E. Screech Owl	14913	16861	19948	Individual Birds
1*	1	1*	Great-Horned Owl				
2	1*	1	Barred Owl	57	52	62	Species on Count Day
0	0	1	Owl, sp.	69	59	68	Species in Count Week
0	1	3	Red-headed Woodpecker				
1*	0	3	Red-bellied Woodpecker				
1	0	1	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
51	58	56	Downy Woodpecker				
8	10	17	Hairy Woodpecker				
2	2	0	N (yellow sh.) Flicker				
2	1	1	Pileated Woodpecker				
0	1	0	E. Wood Pewee				
1	0	0	E. Phoebe				
200	1*	343	Horned Lark	10650	12388	13041	Am. Crow
38	44	133	Blue Jay	982	1193	620	Eur. Starling
10650	12388	13041	Am. Crow	68	0	1180	Evening Grosbeak
1*	0	0	Com. Raven	538	277	950	Mallard
392	393	481	Black-capped Chickadee	410	930	496	House Sparrow
69	69	199	Tufted Titmouse	392	393	481	Black-capped Chickadee
9	3	14	Red-breasted Nuthatch	270	268	456	House Finch
67	80	71	White-breasted Nuthatch	246	249	544	Dark-eyed Junco
2	1	2	Brown Creeper	228	246	352	Rock Dove
1*	0	1*	Carolina Wren	200	1*	343	Horned Lark
1	0	0	Winter Wren				
6	21	33	Golden-crowned Kinglet				
8	7	0	E. Bluebird				
1*	0	0	Thrush, sp.				
1*	18	3	Am. Robin				
0	1*	0	Brown Thrasher				

* Seen during count week, but not on count day - not included in totals.

COUNTS OVER 200

1983	1984	1985	
10650	12388	13041	Am. Crow
982	1193	620	Eur. Starling
68	0	1180	Evening Grosbeak
538	277	950	Mallard
410	930	496	House Sparrow
392	393	481	Black-capped Chickadee
270	268	456	House Finch
246	249	544	Dark-eyed Junco
228	246	352	Rock Dove
200	1*	343	Horned Lark



OBSERVER INFORMATION

<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	
43	39	58	Observers
27	51	22	Party Hours on Foot
38	39	42	Party Hours by Car
18	18	43	Party Hours at Feeders
31	54	28	Party Miles on Foot
387	476	526	Party Miles by Car
0	0	2	Party Hours Owling

submitted by Ruth Sager

WINTER, SPRING, AND EARLY SUMMER OUTINGS

March 9 -- Winter nature hike with Tom Dick. Meet at Babcock parking lot at 12:30 pm for a 3 mile hike emphasizing winter trees, tracks, birds and mammals. For details, phone (266-7912).

March 11 -- For those interested in making a seasonal check list of birds in our chapter territory. Meet at 7:30 at the Richland Veterinary Hospital. This list will be the result of our efforts at the Breeding Bird Survey, winter waterfowl surveys, hawk watch and other activities. For further information, call Tom Dick (266-7912).

March 15 -- Western Pennsylvania Audubon Council Meeting at Clarion University, Clarion, PA. For further details, contact Tom Dick (266-7912).

March 16 -- Winter Waterfowl at Shawnee Lake. Meet at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot in Richland at 7:30 am. This date is frequently the peak gathering time for waterfowl in migration. Check the Tribune club notes for leader and details.

March 20 -- Audubon Meeting. Dr. Stan Shetler, Audubon Plateau member and curator of Botany at the Smithsonian Institute will give a slide illustrated talk on a Smithsonian Expedition to Siberia.

March 21 to 23 -- Delmarva Weekend with Tom Dick. A look at the birds and mammals of our coastal wildlife refuges from Bombay Hook, DE to Assateague Island, VA. Contact Tom for further details (266-7912).

April 6 -- Spring Waterfowl. Meet at Abex driveway near the Quemahoning Dam at 8:00 am. This will be a morning tour of the following areas: Quemahoning Dam, Lasky's Pond, Sammi's Swamp, and Somerset Lake. Check Tribune club notes for leader and details.

April 10 -- Breeding Bird Survey Meeting at the Engineering and Science Building at 7:30 pm. This meeting will bring you to date on last year's activities and prepare you for the upcoming season. There will be a lecture and slides from one of our state's coordinators. Contact Ruth Sager for details (798-3242).

April 17 -- Audubon Meeting. Details later.

April 19 -- Spring Hawk Watch with Mike Sankovich. This is the time when deflected wind from the ridges supports the return of Ospreys, Eagles, and other reptors. An always successful outing (weather dependent, of course). Phone Mike Sankovich (288-2304).

April 26 -- Wild Flower Photography Session with Dave Mikesic. This is in response to members wanting to know how to capture wild flowers on film. Meet at 12:00 noon at the UPJ Engineering and Science parking lot. All cameras and all levels of knowledge welcome. This is an instructional session for your benefit. Contact Dave Mikesic (266-7620).

May 2 and 3 -- Pymatuning Weekend. Warblers, eagles, fish and flowers. Join Doris Brown at this University of Pittsburgh lab facility and get a first rate tour of what spring is all about. This is always a popular and successful trip. Contact Doris Brown for details (255-1223).

May 4 -- Century Bird Count. This is the "Christmas Bird Count" of Spring, when all the birds are back and some are migrating through. The weather is generally pleasant and the staging area is Shawnee Park. Over a hundred species will be counted. This is an all-day invigorating spring experience that no one should miss. Phone Charles Voytko for details (623-2747).



NATURALIST'S CORNER

BLUE SKIES AND BLUEBIRDS

May 9 and 10 -- The Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society offers its first continuing education course for teachers. The emphasis will be on human and natural change in Pennsylvania over the years. It will be a two day session of lectures, films, slides and nature walks by 10 different speakers. The course is worth continuing education credits for teachers. Audubon members wishing to attend should contact Tom Dick or Joe Emerick (266-7912).

May 18 -- Trout, Mayfly Biology and Warblers. These are the topics to be discussed during this hands-on biology session with Tim Fox. Meet at the parking lot across Route 56 from the Babcock picnic area. This is a wonderful experience for those never having experienced the phenomenon of overwintering aquatic insects and the birds and fish that pursue them. Simple hiking along Clearshade Stream. Phone Tim Fox (266-7912).

June 7 -- Children's Nature Hike. Join Joan Lohr in a walking and collecting experience over the UPJ trail. We need more children interested in knowing about the little things in life that are free and always there. Phone Joan Lohr (266-5104).

June 13 and 14 -- Astronomy and Warblers with Kevin Georg and Tom Dick. Camp or sleep-in at a farm on the Allegheny Front near Central City. The evening will be spent with the constellations and the morning with nesting warblers. Bonfires, hikes and swimming. Contact Tom Dick or Kevin Georg (266-7912).

July 26 -- Tour of the new Wild Plant Sanctuary at Babcock. Learn wetland plants and birds. Contact Tom Dick. Further details will be provided in upcoming newsletters (266-7912).

Breeding Bird Block Busting Party -- This is tentatively scheduled for May 31st. We will attempt to take volunteers into areas where no nesting assessments have been made. Further details will be forthcoming. Notify Ruth Sager (798-3242).

Additional outings will be advertised in the next newsletter.

Slowly a hesitating season is beginning to lessen it's grip on our world. Sights and sounds are becoming more numerous with each passing day, and with it a promise of spring. Our back yard feathered friends seem to have an air of excitement in their song - a sure sign that nature is promising better weather with a not too distant season. As the dark clouds of a sometimes unforgiving season leave us once again, all life seems to stir instinctively realizing that this time of the year is the true reason for it's being.

Some of us may be able to boast of seeing Eastern Bluebirds all through the winter months, but for most of us living high on the Allegheny Plateau, we watch with eagerness for blue skies and bluebirds.

Bluebird males usually begin returning to our area in February, followed by the females a short time later.

It is the male's responsibility, since bluebirds are cavity nesters, to locate an unoccupied tree cavity or nesting box. Then he must entice the female into accepting it. In most cases, the female can't resist his sweet suggestive love song. Passive females are offered choice morsels of favored insects in a persuasive jester. (When insects are available, they make up the majority of the Eastern Bluebird's diet).

Because of a housing shortage in certain areas, battles between males over nesting sites is a common occurrence in late winter and early spring. The greatest competition for nesting sites is directly related to a surplus population of English sparrows and starlings (two imported species).

Once the search for a suitable nesting site and the brief courtship period is over, the female will at her leisure begin building a nest in the cavity. It will normally take her one to six days. Although the male may provide some nesting material, he spends most of his time rewarding his mate with song for her accomplishments.

The female normally lays an egg a day until she completes a clutch of 3-5 eggs. Bluebird eggs are blue, similar in color to it's larger cousin, the robin. On rare occasions the eggs are white.

Bluebird eggs hatch in 12-14 days, at

which time the male will share the responsibility of raising the young, including feeding and carrying away the fecal sacs (waste of the young birds).

Young bluebirds grow rapidly and fledge the nest in 15-20 days. Nest failure can be a result of food shortages or parasites. The most common parasite is the larva of blow flies. Young birds usually remain dependent on the parents for food 7-10 days after leaving the nest, at which time they have developed their own skills to survive.

The female Eastern Bluebird normally produces two broods (sometimes three) each year, but yet it's population in some areas is still critically low. We can help the Eastern Bluebird by providing artificial nesting sites and observing the following suggestions:

1. Place boxes in rural areas away from buildings. This discourages house sparrows and starlings from using them.
2. Place boxes 4-5 feet above the ground on posts or poles, where grass or other vegetation is kept short by cutting or grazing cattle.
3. Never mount in areas where insecticides or herbicides are extensively used. This may poison the bird's food supply as well as the bird.
4. Keep boxes 400-500 feet apart to reduce territorial conflicts.
5. When possible, face boxes away from prevailing winds to prevent rain from entering the box.
6. Position boxes so they receive afternoon shade and are in line with a distant tree or fence row. Young birds leaving the nest seek nearby perches.
7. Observe and monitor your nesting boxes, making sure they are cleaned regularly after each use. This prevents harmful parasites which can be fatal to nestlings.

submitted by Joe Emerick

SEE WHAT YOU MISSED?

Nine members, led by Mike and Noreen Sankovich, left Richland at 6:00 am on February 15th in heavy snow to travel to the Susquehanna River in search of winter waterfowl. Despite the snow squalls, we

arrived at Muddy Run State Park in time to spot a mature Bald Eagle sitting regally on a rock in the middle of the dam. This in itself would have made the trip and pit stops worthwhile! The eagle put on a real show while flying to a perch in a tree, visible to all, and remained there for us to watch. Looking over the water, we saw many pairs of common mergansers, a female bufflehead diving energetically, and goldeneyes casually swimming about. Many mergansers and black ducks were sitting on rocks preening. During winter, concentrations of these birds are found near open water, around dams, protected bays, and ice-free lakes.

When we could pull our eyes away from the water, we were pleased to see a number of bluebirds in sumac around the parking area, feeding on the berries of this abundant and hardy species. The eastern bluebird, Sialia sialis, often is found in flocks such as this, in the nonbreeding season.

At our second major stop, the Conewingo Dam, Noreen and Mike got out of the car only to see four eagles soaring overhead. What a sight!

At Conewingo, large boulders and small muddy islands provide ideal winter habitat for many gulls, Great Blue Herons, Black ducks, and common mergansers. It was fun to see the heron, Ardea herodias, four feet tall, standing on huge boulders near the water's edge, waiting for prey. They reminded me of the ones I saw last year at the Reynoldsdale Fish Hatchery, lined up innocently like statues, waiting for a free meal.

In the sumac in the parking area, a Red-bellied woodpecker, Melanerpes carolinus, fed on the berries, hanging in such a way that we could actually see the red belly patch. This bird seemed to be taking the berries from one place and storing them in another tree nearby.

Though we searched a large stand of evergreens, near dusk, for long-eared owls reported roosting there, we were unable to find them.

This elusive medium-sized owl, Asio otus, roosts in conifers. The fields nearby were actively being hunted by male and female Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, and Sharp-shinned hawks. A Rough-legged hawk was seen over the conifers.



The nine tired, cold, and hungry members were treated to a gourmet tail-gate picnic put on by Eric and Eileen Stuver. This feast and the forty-six species of birds we saw was more than enough to make us want to plan another outing SOON. See what you missed!

submitted by Sally Dick

AUTUMN HAWK WATCH

Double your pleasure, double your fun, doubled our numbers, that's what we have done! So went the Tussey Mountain Autumn Hawk Watch in 1985. The totals were down once again at many migration lookouts throughout the states, but the good news from Tussey is that we have more than doubled the 1984 count.

Highlights of the month of September included: Sept. 12, 344 broadwings, with a days total of 364 birds. Also passing in September were two Bald Eagles, two Northern Goshawks, and one Merlin, the first ever counted from Tussey. On Oct. 12, the total was once again impressive, with two Goshawks, 90 Sharp-shinned hawks, 69 Red-tailed hawks, and three Peregrine Falcons. That day was truly exciting, with many of the regulars joining Ruth Sager on that day. October also brought two more merlins, three Golden Eagles, and a total of seven Peregrines. In November, the hawk watch was hampered by rain and fog, which limited our coverage to only seven days. Six of those days however, produced eagles. The highlight was on Nov. 8, with five Golden Eagles recorded. Nov. 23, brought an adult Bald Eagle passing the lookout at eye-level, at a very close distance. Eagle totals for November were 13 Golden and 1 Bald.

The total number of days covered in 1985 was 45, with a total of 231.8 hours logged. Once again, these totals represent only the days when someone was there to count them. The total could have been much higher if more days were covered; however, the weather did play a significant role in limiting coverage in November. Once again a Thank You to DGP's Dave Koppenhaver and Tim Flannigan. A special thanks to Steve Switzer, whose land management practices worked in beautifully with the improvement

of the site. And to all of the participants, without whom all of this would not have been possible: Tom and Sally Dick, Dave Escherich, Kevin Georg, Ron Rovancek, Glen and Ruth Sag Bob Thompson and Mike Wolf. This year we intend to explore the possibility of a Spring hawk watch on Tussey. I hope that those who have not been able to join us will take this opportunity to join us on the mountain.

SPECIES TOTALS

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>
Total Days	40	45
Hours	175.5	231.8
Species		
Black Vultures	5	8
Turkey Vultures	60	200
N. Goshawk	1	6
Sharp-shinned	208	433
Coopers Hawk	25	84
Red-Tailed	322	546
Red Shouldered	23	28
Broad-Winged	201	443
Rough-Legged	0	0
Golden Eagle	9	16
Bald Eagle	4	3
Northern Harrier	39	50
Osprey	22	38
Peregrine	4	7
Am. Kestrel	11	28
Merlin	0	3
Unidentified	21	35
Total	<u>965</u>	<u>1928</u>

submitted by Michael A. Sankovich

PIPING PLOVER ADDED TO ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST

The beach-loving, sand colored piping plover, found only in North America, was officially listed January 10th, as an endangered species in the Great Lakes watershed, including New York and Pennsylvania, and as threatened from the Canadian Maritime provinces down to the West Indies. Threatened status carries the same protection as endangered, but indicates the species is not facing the threat of extinction in the foreseeable future. A recovery team has been

announced to develop strategies for protecting the species.

Although Pennsylvania no longer has any known breeding pairs, there are an estimated 476 pairs of breeding piping plovers believed to nest in the coastal areas of the northeastern United States.

The piping plover is a small, stocky shorebird about 7 inches in length and weighs from 1.5 to 2 ounces. It nests primarily on open sandy beaches, where it arrives in early spring. By Memorial Day, as the seasonal influx of beachcombers and sunbathers begins, pairs generally are incubating clutches of four eggs in shallow depressions. The primary reasons for its decline are loss or degradation of habitat to beach development and loss of nests and young to high tides, disturbance by humans and dogs, and predation by gulls, foxes, and other mammals.

Fences and signs are placed around nesting areas on national wildlife refuges where public beach use is heavy, such as Chincoteague (17 pairs). But fences and signs are of little protection from high tides, frisbees, balls, and other thrown objects, or unwatched children and dogs, and the curious.

Please remember this when you go to the shore this summer!

POCONO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

The director of PEEC, John J. Padalino, made an offer during a Gifford Pinchot Audubon Chapter meeting to match a scholarship for any Audubon Society Chapter who sponsors a teacher to a PEEC Teacher Workshop. If our chapter sponsors a teacher to attend one of the PEEC workshops listed below, PEEC will provide a scholarship to a second teacher from the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society.

In 1986, PEEC will convene the following workshops for teachers:

- Birding for Beginners; 18-20 April (\$79)
- Warbler Weekend; 9-11 May (\$59)
- Plants of the Poconos; 13-15 June (\$59)
- Birding for Beginners; 5-7 Sept. (\$79)
- Hawk Watch Weekend; 12-14 Sept. (\$59)
- Arts, Photography; and the Environment; 26-28 Sept. (\$59)
- Hawk Watch Weekend; 3-5 Oct. (\$59)
- Hawk Watch Weekend; 31 Oct.-2 Nov. (\$59)

Cost for a weekend includes registration, six meals, and lodging.

Teachers who participate in these PEEC workshops are eligible to receive one inservice credit, which is awarded by the Department of Education.

If anyone is interested, please contact Tom Dick (266-7912).

PEEC also has many residential programs, special events, and family vacation programs. For a brochure describing these programs and events, please write:

Pocono Environmental Education Center
RD 1 Box 268
Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328

DO SOMETHING
WILD



National Audubon and our Pennsylvania chapters were extremely active in securing passage of the nongame wildlife income tax "check-off" donation. It allows taxpayers to contribute to Pennsylvania's nongame wild plant and animal fund known as the "Wild Resource Conservation Fund". Instructions are on your PA State Income Tax forms.

The reintroduction of River Otters into their native habitat and the "Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Project" are just 2 of more than 28 projects that have been funded by this fund. Other projects underway include a survey of the native wild plants, mammal surveys, surveys of non-game fish, study of rattlesnakes, and educational materials on reptiles and amphibians.

The many users of the Commonwealth's public and private recreation areas will receive benefits from the fund. The result will be better management of wildlife and native wild plants by the state's environmental agencies.

The Saw-whet Owl was selected as the logo because the owl is a symbol of wisdom. The owl is watching over the wise use and protection of wildlife and wild plant programs. It is the smallest owl in PA, only 6-8 inches tall. Its plumage is a dull chocolate-brown, spotted with white, and its undersides are white spotted with dark reddish-brown. It has no ear-tuffs. This owl is a common winter resident in PA. It also breeds locally in the state. Because of its small size and secretive habits, it is not often seen. It eats small rodents that might otherwise damage crops or orchards.

50th Anniversary

Audubon Camps and Ecology Workshops

Come join us in a celebration of nature ...

... as we embark on Audubon's 50th year of excellence in environmental education and field natural history studies.

The magic has been working now since the founding of the first Audubon Camp in Maine in 1936.

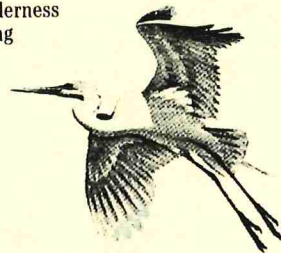
Here, in superb natural settings, in the company of distinguished naturalists and fellow students who share your interest in nature, you'll search a pond for whirligig beetles and damselfly nymphs. Or dredge the ocean floor for starfish and sea urchins. Or feel a sphagnum bog quaking beneath your feet. Or follow paths blazed by mountain sheep. Or camp beside a rushing stream under a starry sky.

Field studies range from geology and marine life to birds, mammals, plants; insects, weather, astronomy, and renewable energy. For recreation you may canoe a chain of lakes in Wisconsin, explore a wild island in Maine, go rafting in Wyoming, or roam the lovely, lush, deciduous woods of Connecticut.

Camp sessions for adults run for one or two weeks. College credit is available. There are also sessions for children in Maine and for families in Wisconsin; introductory field ecology for educators in Connecticut; field ornithology in Maine; wilderness research in Wyoming; and nature photography in Wyoming and Wisconsin.

You'll learn to better understand and protect the wild creatures and wild places that we love. As it has done for so many others, this Audubon experience will enrich the rest of your life.

For a free color brochure write:
National Audubon Society
Audubon Camps and Workshops
613-B Riversville Road
Greenwich, Ct 06831



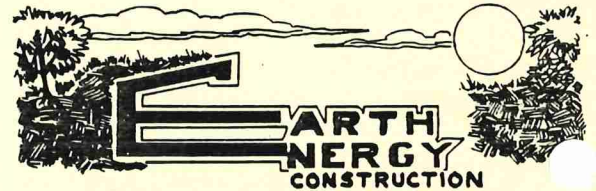
There are summer jobs available at Audubon Camps in Connecticut and Wisconsin. They include chefs, kitchen help, and instructors in physical environment, botany, animal life and bird life. For application and detailed job description: The National Environmental Education Center National Audubon Society 613 Riversville Road Greenwich, CT 06831 (phone 203-869-2017)

The Eleventh Annual National Conference on Rivers will be held April 4-6 in Washington, DC. It is sponsored by the American Rivers Conservation Council and the Environmental Policy Institute. This year's conference focuses on hydropower and river conservation.

Watch for the all-new Audubon Television Specials starting in March on PBS stations and in July on WTBS (Turner Broadcasting System). This is a major three-year co-production with the National Audubon Society.

The Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society Newsletter is now accepting advertisements. Details on advertising rates and publishing policy will be in the next newsletter.

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Audubon Society

Newsletter

Volume 3 Number 2 July 1986

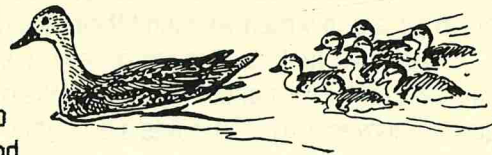
Atlas Update

There should be about fifty birders out there in Region 35 these days making birding history in the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Survey. Although reports are not due until completion of the breeding season, some news has been circulating about the good birding discoveries in 1986. Since region 35 covers all of Bedford County and the eastern half of Somerset County, there is a wide range of habitat. The southern border of the region is on the Pa.-Maryland line, also adding to the possibility of finding a number of southern species. Whatever the final results will be at the completion of the survey in 1988, we do know at this time that we are learning a lot about birding in this area. Of the 138 blocks to be covered, 40 had at least some coverage in 1985. We will surely add many more in 1986 and hope for full coverage by the end of the survey in 1988.

I have been particularly impressed this summer with the people involved in the study of our birdlife. In addition to those enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers who are out there with binoculars, tape recorders, spotting scopes, cameras, and all manner of paraphernalia serving in an official capacity for the survey, wherever we go there are birdwatchers of one sort or another. Many of them have contributed significantly to the project by sharing information about birds in their own little corner of the region. This has been a pleasure for me to see, and I am grateful for the input of all concerned.

I have also fallen in love all over with our beautiful Pennsylvania as I have gone into several quadrangles and found the most interesting out-of-the-way places. Even the abundance of ticks in the Hyndman Quad doesn't prevent me from saying that it was one of the most picturesque areas that I have seen in quite awhile. Putting it all together, the 1986 Survey has been great so far, and I am sure the final reports from all volunteers will make it even greater.

Roz Gordon shared one of my first trips into the Hyndman Quad. One of the stories that I am sure she has enjoyed telling is about the stop we made at a lovely old log house. When we asked the lady of the house whether we could check out the area around her home, she replied, "Oh, sure! You are welcome to look, but I have cats, and there aren't any birds around here. You can't have cats and birds both." While she was talking, we saw Chimney Swifts going down her chimney; a Yellow Warbler picking insects out of her rain gutter; grackles, starlings, robins, House Sparrows, and Cedar Waxwings in the yard and in front of the house. A phoebe flew to its nest under the bridge at the edge of her small yard. On the other side of the highway, we found Mallards and a Green-backed heron at the edge of a pond, nesting Bluebirds, nesting Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, a pair of Kingbirds, nesting Song Sparrows, Common Yellow-throats and Field Sparrows in trees and bushes around the pond. White-breasted Nuthatches and a Tufted Titmouse sang in the woods beyond the pond.



The blocks covered in the Hyndman and adjoining Evitts Creek Quads and a good variety of species because Lake Koon and Lake Gordon are in this area. A Pied-billed Grebe and Great Egret were seen, but we did not have any evidence of nesting. Swallows were abundant, and included Cliff, Northern Rough-winged, Tree and Barn Swallows. Yellow-throated Vireo and a good variety of warblers included *N. parula*, cerulean and worm-eating.

N. Parula and Cerulean warblers and Cliff Swallows were also found in another very southern quad, the Cumberland, which extends into Maryland and West Virginia. Its mountainous habitat produced a common raven.

The Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus* *savannarum*, to Richard Mock, who likes to throw around those scientific names) is listed as Proposed Special Concern in Pennsylvania and has been designated as an "asterisked" bird requiring a special report by the atlasers. Although it appears to be rather common in Region 35, it is considered to be very uncommon in other regions. Even if we must do a little extra work preparing the Special Species Report form for these sparrows, our atlasers should find it a special challenge to stop often in their blocks and make an effort to locate them, since the results will be very helpful in studies of this species. So far this year I have found them in the Cumberland, Everett-West, New Baltimore, Stoystown and Hooversville Quads. On June 27th, Mike Sankovich and I found twenty fields in the No. 6 block of the New Baltimore Quad containing grasshopper sparrows. Some birders miss them because of their insect-like song, so it is well to be on a special lookout for a bird singing in a hayfield that sounds like an insect. When the sound was pointed out by us to a lady hiking past one hayfield, she exclaimed, "That's a bird! My husband and I thought they were locusts and wondered what they were doing in the fields." I couldn't quite associate them with locusts-- perhaps crickets, though. The point is that they may fool you. Ron Rovanseck said that once he was sure of the grasshopper sparrow's song, he found them easily in his Alum Bank block. This will probably be the experience of others who have not been familiar with them, so it is well to specifically look for them in Region 35. Another sparrow of greater concern is the Henslow's, which is designated "Proposed Threatened". It is possible to find them in Western Pennsylvania, but they are rarely reported east of the Alleghenies. They too, have a very unusual song, described as "sslick", and can often go unnoticed. However, once identified, they are easy to spot since the song is very distinctive. It, like the grasshopper sparrow, often sings while hidden in a field, so it is important to learn the songs. If you think a tape of either of these species would be helpful, please let me know and I will be able to secure one for you.

Several of the Allegheny Plateau members were able to go to a location in the New Baltimore Quad and hear and see several Henslows in one colony. Luckily, I had spotted them while driving through the area with the windows down. At least ten birds were found at that time and confirmation of nesting was made when two were seen carrying insects. Four and five individual birds were observed in later visits. Restored coal-stripping land is good habitat for this species, but the field in which we found them had never been stripped.

Surprises lurk around the corner in every birding trip, as many of you are probably finding out. One of my best experiences was the discovery of cliff swallows nesting right in my home quad at Hooversville. This was a bird that I was totally unprepared for, for some reason. A nest with young was pointed out to me in the barn by the family that had permitted me to conduct my atlas work on their land. A surprise of another sort was the result of an effort to follow through on the suggested quest for rails by playing tapes to establish their presence. My brother-in-law and I both landed knee-deep in the muck of a swamp in the Stoystown Quad. If I had not been able to grasp a nearby shrub, pull myself out, and then give Jay Sager a helping hand, we might have had a long wait until rescued. Jay is covering a quad up in Elk County and had just come to visit us after being interrupted in his survey by four bears eating June berries in one tree.

I hope I've made it clear that there is more to the Pa. Breeding Bird Atlas Project than just counting birds. If you aren't in on the fun, what about next year?

Submitted by:

Ruth Sager, Region 35 Coordinator
RD 1 Box 176-B
Hooversville, PA 15936
814-798-3242

(Ed. *Cindy Ait, Coordinator for Cambria Co., can be reached by calling 487-4515. Recently Dr Lynn Sanderson, working within a Cambria quad, confirmed nesting Horned Larks.*)

Audubon Potpourri

Volunteers are needed for conducting field trips within Stackhouse Park; this event commemorates the 50th Anniversary of Stackhouse Park. The volunteers will be needed from 11 am to 7pm on August 30 (Saturday), anyone interested please contact Tom Dick at 266-7912.

Soon a nominating committee will be formed to select new officers for both the executive committee and standing committees, anyone interested in becoming more active within the society should notify Dr. Doris Brown (255-1223). Frankly, we would like all members to be on some type of committee so the door is wide open with the only requirement being regular attendance at meetings and a desire to help.

APAS (Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society) completed its first environmental teacher's institute. The program was held at UPJ during the spring and offered continuing education credits for teachers. The program, a cooperative project with the conservation district, was an attempt to transfer ecological thinking from Audubon to teachers to students. Over fifty teachers attended.

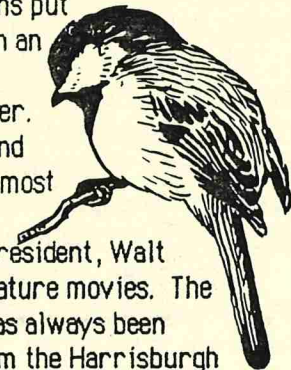
The Black-capped chickadee is our new chapter bird. Spring elections put the chickadee well ahead of a variety of other birds, mammals, and even an arachnid: the Brown Recluse spider. I personally can think of no more welcome, loveable, resident species than this friendly little cavity nester.

During the bleak of winter we're always treated to its cheerful song and feeder acrobatics. I also think the chickadee, named for its song, is the most familiar bird to members.

APAS has received special thanks from Audubon Mid-Atlantic Vice President, Walt Pomeroy, for donating \$200.00 toward the purchase of much needed nature movies. The Mid-Atlantic office, located in Harrisburg, is on a limited budget but has always been generous with regional chapters. APAS has used many nature films from the Harrisburgh library in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

Once again the Game Commission has approved our hawk counting station on the summit of Tussey Mountain. There members watch the skies identifying and counting migrating birds of prey; this information than goes to the Hawk Mountain Computers where it will be used to determine the status of raptor populations. Our hawk watch, open lovingly to members, begins the latter part of August and continues to the end of November. Join us on the mountain: let us teach you to identify these birds. Beware, it can be addicting: brisk fall winds, colorful fall foliage, puffy white clouds, and throngs of songbirds keep you coming back.

Audubon will once again conduct its highly successful bird seed sale; we offer the best seeds at good prices with the profits supporting society activities. Contact Eric and Eileen Stuver at 288-1759.



Naturalist Corner

The land Owner -- Best Source of Information

On May 4, 1986, as Mike and Noreen Sankovich travelled toward Powdermill, to enjoy a day of bird banding, they observed a "dove-like" long-legged bird land on an electric line, and saw it touch the elbows together as it folded its wings over its back. Mike thought this action was unusual, and told Mr Robert C. Leberman, of Carnegie Museum of Natural History fame, about this wierd yellowlegs (?) landing on a wire. Mike quickly learned that a sober yellowlegs most certainly would not land on a wire, and if one had landed on an electric line it most certainly would not be sober, and therefore unable to clap its elbows together before folding its wings. Bob explained that the observed specimen was most likely an Upland Sandpiper, Bartramia longicauda.

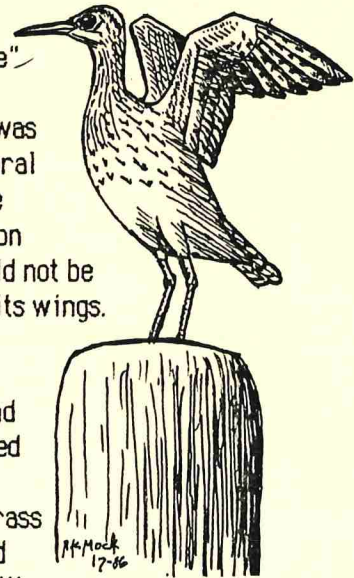
On the following weekend, May 11, 1986, I rode along with Mike and Noreen to Powdermill, and they informed me of the incident. I had lived two school terms in western Nebraska, and two in Ohio, and had never observed an Upland Sandpiper. This bird from the Argentine pampa grass had always remained a mythical unknown to me. We casually observed all the wires and poles and posts in the region that morning, and left with mythical Bartramia still a myth. This could be the end of the story -- but maybe God loves birdwatchers after all!

On June 22, 1986, my brother and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Gregory D. Mock, took an evening walk after a trying weekend in Pittsburgh. Greg is a medical doctor, and rather well practiced in the engagement of observation. He informed me that as they walked past the John Lehman farm, these funny strange birds kept swooping the tops of their heads. He said they were quite different, and that he had never seen a bird like these before. He said that they were brownish like a killdeer, flew like a gull, landed on a pole or wire like a dove, looked a little pigeon-like, and held their wings over their backs when they folded them. I thought he was reading to me from a field guide. Then he said when the birds were agitated they made a loud "prrrrrrr r r r," like a Spaniard rolling his "R"s. Greg can do a real good imitation of the bird. He takes after his brother. Much to the dismay of my Spanish teacher, I still cannot roll "R"s. Trying to sound real professional and not display my excitement, I said, "I think I know what you have there. It sounds like it 'might be' Upland Sandpipers," while thinking, "The very creature that has evaded my eyesight for 26 years!" It was 9:00 p.m. and dark when Greg called. I told him that I would check the sighting first thing in the morning.

I didn't sleep very well during the humid overcast night, and was up at 6:00 a.m. After arriving at the farm, and stepping out of the car, the first thing I heard was the Spaniard. My heart was in my throat. It took me 15 minutes and a half mile walk to find the birds. I had almost given up, when I spotted a bird walking through the pasture grass. As I focused on the sandpiper, I also spotted two downy young running for cover about three feet from the adult. My total observation time was seven minutes. As I turned to walk back to the barn, the adult landed on the wire above me, another adult landed on the pole in front of me, another was hovering in the wind over my head, and I heard others behind me, down by the pond.

I was so excited -- I had to tell someone. It is hard to find people to tell at six-thirty in the morning. I stopped at Greg's and told him that they were definately upland sandpipers. I went home and filled out the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Verification Form. I then went to Dr. Dick's, and told him of the find, called work, and swapped days off.

I called mr John Lehman to ask permission to park along his field edge, and to let him know what I would be doing. He seemed rather intrigued that someone would be interested in Upland Plovers, and I was shocked that he knew what an Upland Sandpiper was.



When I stopped at the farm, I decided to introduce myself before pursuing the sandpipers. He and his wife invited me out on the porch, where we sat and talked until 4:50 p.m. During our discussion I learned that he was an avid birdwatcher for more years than I am old, a "retired" school teacher from the Johnstown Christian School, and one of Stan Shetler's (Curator of Systematic Botany, Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C.) natural science mentors. He told me that he has 350 species of birds on his life list. Then he said, "Actually it is more than 350. I started my life list over at the age of 70 to show people that life isn't over at 70." All of this discussion took place while barn swallows were feeding young in the nest above our heads, six Ruby-throated Hummingbirds battled for position at the four flowered feeder under the grape arbor, Red-winged Blackbirds fed their young in the field behind the summer house, and the groundhog watched from his hole under the porch. John is a diabetic, and doesn't get around as well as he used to. He drives the car down to the pond and uses it as a blind, from which he has made some remarkable observations. Some of them he would not allow me to share, because, as he said, "There was no one here at the time to verify them." A sign of a truly good ornithologist. By the way, he has had past personal observations printed in American Birds.

Mr. Lehman keeps birding records of his observations. He has dug out his first annual sighting records on the Upland Sandpiper (plover)! I hope you are ready for this! I sure wasn't! April 20, 1961 (near the pond), May 7, 1967 (near the pond), April 16, 1969 (near the pond), May 7, 1971 (near the pond), May 6, 1974 (near the pond), May 6, 1978 (near the pond), April 23, 1979 (pasture across from the barn), May 2 1980 (near the pond), May 17, 1981 (in eight acre field south of the pond), April 25, 1982 (on post in field beside pond), May 13, 1983 (on post by pond), May 26, 1984 (on bank of pond), April 27, 1985 (on post by pond), May 27, 1985 (a pair at pond), April 25 1986 (a pair in the meadow on the south side of the pond; one bird flew over to maple), May 26, 1986 (one bird at pond), June 22, 1986 (two adults and four downy chicks at pond -- this is the same day thatv the adults swooped Greg and Marcie along the road, above the pond), July 10, 1986 (one adult with two well feathered chicks at the pond). From his observations Mr. Lehman believes that the sandpipers nest on mild sloping pasture.

I have noted some remaining traditional practices that assist wildlife on the Lehman farm. Fields are not cut all at the same time. Even with individual fields cuttings are staggered. Mr. Lehman always used a flushing bar, and when possible someone would walk in front of the bar to check nest sites at the flush. This also helps to save tight sitting birds like the Upland Sandpiper. Most of the fence rows on the barn side of the farm are traditional hedge rows. The farm still supports an old orchard and tree lot. The pond has between 20 and 50 feet (more in some places) of natural field border. On the two bordering farms there are also various stages of pasture growth.

You might think that land management does not matter to wildlife. Consider this. Besides Upland Sandpipers, the farm also supports healthy populations of Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Eastern Bluebirds, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Savannah Sparrows. In the past, the pond has hosted such unusual stopovers as Bewick's wren, Bohemian Waxwings, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Water Pipits, Sora Rail, and Virginia Rail. Land management does matter.

Consider this also. Practically everything of scientific value listed in this article was gained by asking permission to enter private property! Remember, that the land owner can be your best source of information.

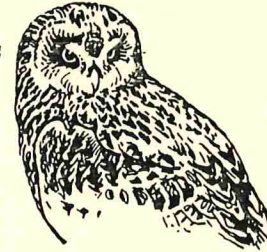
Submitted by Dick Mock

See what you missed!

Of Short-ear Owls etc. :

On Sunday March 2, about a dozen members car pooled to Elder Ridge in Indiana County. There we were hoping to observe the Short-eared Owls, reported to still be in that area. The birds had been seen each evening just before dusk, flying low over a reclaimed strip mine near the Indiana and Armstrong County line.

After about an hours time, without any owls, we decided to look for some sign of their presence, or other birds. Under some perch sites we located pellets (the undigested encapsulated portion of the owl's prey). Examination revealed that the owls were preying on Meadow Voles. A later search of the fields confirmed an abundance of this prey species.



At about 5:30 p.m. we decided to search the area for any other avifauna we might encounter. During that jaunt around the strip mine we discovered a couple of Red-tail Hawks, A northern Harrier, and some Ring-neck Pheasants. Our first owl was sighted just as we were about to turn around, on the far side of the strip mine. This owl led to the discovery of four other individuals. For about a half an hour these birds put on a spectacular show, as they flew just over our heads, and coursed, harrier-like, over the fields as they searched for prey. We watched as the birds worked their way across the fields to where we had begun our search. We decided to follow and get one last glimpse of these birds before departing. On the way back across the strip mine we noticed a peculiar gray and white bird perched in the top of a small tree adjacent to the road. Could this be a shrike? A closer examination with a scope revealed that, yes it was indeed a Northern shrike. This bird was "the icing on the cake," a lifer for most of us. After watching the shrike for a while, we then returned to the field from where we had begun. There in the twilight we were treated, to the owls once more. What better way to end an evening?

Spring hawk Watch

If you ever wanted to know what hawk watching was all about, Saturday April 19, was the perfect opportunity. After a week of a return to winter-like weather, we again welcomed the Spring. Six members made the trip to our Tussey Mountain Hawk Watch, near Everett, Pa. in Bedford County. We arrived at about 9:00 a.m. and were greeted by Ron Rovancek, who informed us that the flight was already in progress.

This was the second day of our first attempt at a Spring migration count at this site. It was the observation of Ospreys in the Spring of the year which led to the formation of Autumn hawk watch. Because the Spring migration occurs over a wide area, we did not expect to see hawks in numbers which would rival some of our best days in the Autumn. For the past two years we had made the pilgrimage to Tuscarora summit, some forty miles farther East.

The cooler temperatures of the morning, kept the birds flying low along the top of the ridge, allowing observation at relatively close distances. Most of the early birds passed right before our eyes. As the morning progressed, the altitude of the birds rose with the temperature. We were kept on our toes most of the morning counting, with only short intervals without hawks. By noon, most birds were seen flying very high, and it wasn't until after lunch that things slowed down somewhat. Perhaps we were missing birds at extreme heights.

As always, we had the company of Turkey Vultures around us at all times. At 1:30 p.m. we observed two Black Vultures flying South (the wrong way for migrants) along the ridge. Previous observation in the fall of these birds flying both up and down the ridge may indicate a breeding population in Bedford County. Also observed were seven Northern Ravens, whose acrobatic maneuvers entertained us as they flew South. Both species warrant further investigation as to their breeding status in Southern Bedford County, for the Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas.

The high point of the day was of course the hawks, and the totals worked out like this: 101 Broad-winged Hawks, 13 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 9 Red-tail Hawks, 2 Coopers hawks, 8 Osprey, 3 Northern Harriers, 2 American Kestrels and 2 Unidentified raptors. This gave us a total of 140 for the day. When combined with Friday's numbers we had over 250 birds. This was far above our expectations, and means that we will be investigating the possibility of conducting a Spring hawk migration count on a regular basis next year.

If the close observation of hawks and eagles is of interest to you. Why not attend our organizational meeting on the third Thursday in August at UPJ? Learn more on raptor identification, and how you can become a participant at our Fall Hawk Watch. We will meet in the Engineering and Science Auditorium at 7:30 p.m..

Submitted by Mike Sankovitch

Delmarva Peninsula Trip

Fifteen auduboners, involved in a variety of activities, toured selected refuges of the Delmarva Peninsula March 21 to 23; the main tour spots were Bombay Hook NWR, Little Creek Wildlife Management Area, Chincoteague NWR, and Blackwater NWR. At Bombay Hook we were treated to a Marsh Hawk dive bombing a Ruddy Duck; the hawk kept coming up empty handed and the nervous duck kept diving while working out a flight plan. What were auduboners doing during this saga? They were split between hawk rooters and duck supporters. Alas, the duck flew away leaving the hawk empty taloned. We all felt a lesson was learned here but no one knew what it was.



Despite very busy days we had four participants roll out of bed at four in the morning to see Halley's Comet; the event, orchestrated by NOAA, consisted of large telescopes situated behind the dunes on Assateague Island and open to the public. Other visual treats were deer splashing across a brackish marsh at Chincoteague, paired Ospreys searching platforms for nesting sites, stately eagles posing on ghostly snags, and Gannets plunge diving for herring well offshore. Each habitat had a hidden jewel and we did our best to find it and by our last day our species list spilled over setting a new Allegheny Plateau record of 110.

(Ed. note: These are just a few of the many field trips advertised during the year, we encourage all members to try our local or more distant trips.)

The Rehabilitation Clinic*

I once lamented that despite visits to many of America's wilderness areas I had not seen a Black Bear. This changed abruptly with the Pa. Game Commission's bear reintroduction program which not only made it possible to see bear in rural Pennsylvania, but, unfortunately—at-times, suburbs, and even city as well. The logic was to reintroduce bear into historic breeding grounds, a workable concept with one glaring exception; historically the bears were here without civilization and all its developments (roads, mines, sprawl). Introduced bear now have to deal not only with the products of civilization but its prejudices as well. The prejudices translate into bear complaints; bear complaints encompass the following: raiding bee hives, killing livestock (sheep), whacking pesty dogs, short-cutting through yards while the owner is sunbathing, to just being around. The result of all this are injuries to bears resulting from recapture attempts or being struck by cars. Our clinic has examined 7 bears in the last two years, some have been hospitalized, others have been discharged on the same day. We've learned a lot about bear nutrition, in particular, their craving for high carbohydrate, especially junk food. Our last bear, released July 1, 1986, would eat 3 dozen donuts for breakfast, just a little snack while waiting for the main course, plus half a bushel of fruits and vegetables while totally ignoring meat. In nature their diet is high carbohydrate with protein of animal origin mostly in the form of insects, some carrion, and occasional ground squirrels.



When food is scarce they simply go into hibernation and slowly burn up their body fat. The bears we've treated are mostly young males, during spring, the time of greatest admittances, they travel extensively seeking both territory and a receptive sow. An example of their movements is a bear tagged in Maryland and recaptured in the Johnstown area.

Two more animal stories: A Tundra Swan flying at top speed, near Prince Gallitizin, crashed into a plate glass window; the window was adjacent to a kitchen table where an otherwise quiet breakfast turned into considerable confusion. Don't worry! The story has a happy ending (i.e. for the swan). The swan was successfully treated and released, however, the window and dishes needed replaced. The most unusual case this season was a Virginia Rail. When first presented I was curious as to the pristine marsh it came from, to my surprise it was not a marsh but a basement--a basement in Moxham! Wait, the story does not end here, it wandered into the basement and was caught in a rat trap! Perhaps, we should play rail tapes in area basements--we may have discovered a new rail habitat. The Virginia Rail, although a unusual spring visitor has been reported at a number of local marshes. Recently, breeding birds have been confirmed at Somerset Lake. No doubt, more will be found as the breeding bird survey progresses.

Submitted by Tom Dick

**(Ed. note: The clinic is located at the Richland Veterinary Hospital which is a fully licensed by the both Federal and State government. The clinic's goal is to rehabilitate injured or orphaned wildlife and release when able back into the wild. Members wishing to provide foster homes for orphaned wildlife should notify Dr. Dick at 266-7912)*

Nature Note

The winter of "85-86" will be known as a block buster for Evening Grosbeaks; they not only arrived in hordes but they ate their way throught a winters supply of sunflower seeds in a matter of weeks. Surprisingly, the Evening Grosbeak was not a winter resident in the eastern U.S. till the turn of the century, possibly the eastern appeal is feeders. Grosbeaks only visit us every other year when the seeds of spruce and maples are scarce in their northern nesting habitats; remember the 1984 Christmas count was 0 while the 1985 count was 1180. The Grosbeaks lingered till May feeding on maple buds. Other winter finches were absent (Common Redpole, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch) but some showed up during the spring migration at local feeding stations.

Upcoming Events

August 9 ---Mini-Tour of the new Wild Plant Sanctuary at Gallitzin Forest just beyond Windber. This wetland, properly called a mountain glade, is a unique environment with specifically adapted aquatic plants (many of which are carnivorous). We will be relocating Pitcher Plants from an endangered bog to this area under a DER Mini-Grant. Be prepared to get wet and bring binoculars. Call 266-7912 to let us know of your attendance. We will meet at the parking lot diagonally across from the Babcock picnic area on Rt. 56, this will be a three hour event starting at 10 a.m.

August 21--Slide presentation on Birds of Prey--this is to get everyone agitated for the spectacle of fall migration--the slides, from New Hampshire, will give all the information you need to know in order to identify and appreciate our hawks and eagles. This is also the annual update and "beg for participation" for your Tussey Mountain Hawk Watch. Meeting time is at 7:30 p.m.in the Engineering and Science Building at UPJ.

The remaining upcoming events are listed on the last page.

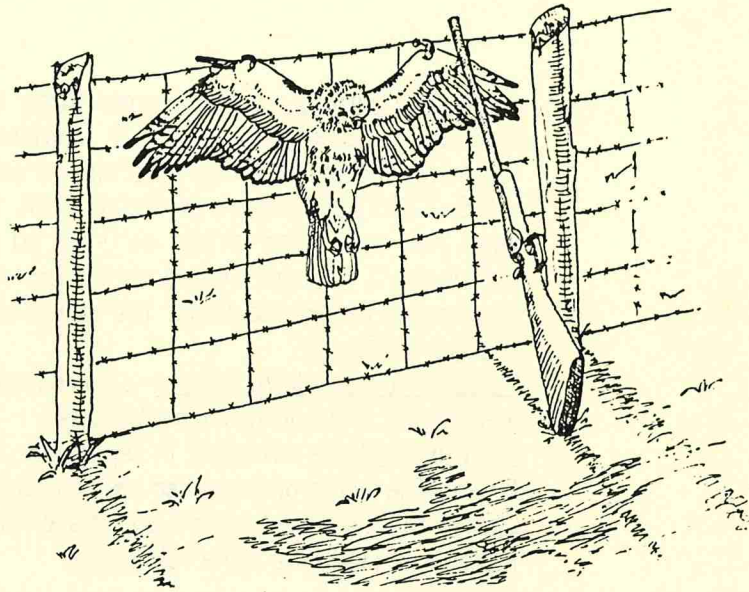
BIRDS OF PREY AND SMALL GAME:
FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT FOR A
CONFERENCE AT HAWK MOUNTAIN

There is much talk these days about the decline of rabbit and pheasant populations in Pennsylvania. Some people are blaming birds of prey for the declines, and there is even talk of the need to "control" raptor populations. What are the facts? Are populations of great horned owls and red-tailed hawks increasing? Are small game populations declining? Are raptors responsible? What about such other factors as agricultural practices?

These topics and questions will be the focus of a conference, "Birds-of-Prey Populations and Predation on Small Game in Pennsylvania," to be held at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary on 6 September 1986. Among the guests who have agreed to participate is Peter S. Duncan, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. He will discuss the Commission's policy and program on birds of prey. Other guests will discuss principles of predator-prey ecology, small game and agriculture, laws protecting birds of prey, and what individuals and Audubon chapters can do to help.

The conference will meet in the Common Room at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary on Saturday, 6 September--the start of the broad-winged hawk migration season. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. and the program will end at about 3:30 p.m. There will also be a barbeque and an evening lecture for those who wish to stay. Dr. Richard Clark of York College will be the guest for the evening lecture, which will begin at 8:00 p.m. His illustrated program will be on great horned owls in Pennsylvania.

Plan to spend the day and the night at Hawk Mountain. Camping facilities or motels are available nearby.



Please use the coupon below to request full program details (to be sent when they are available). The number of participants will be limited, so if you are interested, please let us know. A modest registration fee will be charged.

This conference is being cosponsored by the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and the National Audubon Society, Mid-Atlantic Regional Office.

(Clip here)

Yes, I am interested. Please send me the details.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zipcode _____

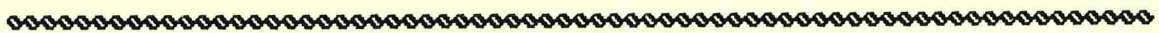
Return coupon to:

Birds of Prey/Small Game Conference
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association
Rte. 2, Kempton, PA 19529

Astronomy Outings--something new under the moon! We're experimenting with a new type of program. An evening from 10 p.m. to midnight identifying planets, meteor showers, constellations and listening to nocturnal creatures. For those interested call Kevin Georg (288-1763) and get on a participant list. When the perfect night comes (low humidity, cooler temp., new moon, clear skies) we'll call all those who signed up. The location is variable, we're mobile and if you have a good location don't hesitate to suggest it. We're willing to travel for members in distant locations. The idea is a once a month get-together looking at the seasonal changes in the sky.

Tussey Mountain Hawk Watch--a three month continuous outing from August to November. All members are encouraged to participate.

Monthly meetings will start in September, they are held the third thursday each month at UPJ at 8 p.m. The month of December has no regular meeting but we do have our annual Christmas Bird Count which is always a big event. We will try to send out reminders for meetings but, frankly, we could use more volunteers.



Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society Executive Board

**President - Dr. Thomas Dick
266-7912**

**Recording Secretary - Linda Sell
266-2734**

**Vice President - Dr. Doris Brown
255-1223**

**Treasurer - Rosalind Gordon
288-1248**

**Corresponding Secretary - Horeen Sankovich
288-2304**

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

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Chickadee Chatter

Newsletter of the
Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society



Volume 3

Number 3

November 1986

This years upcoming premier event: The 1986 Christmas Bird Count

Everybody--Yes, everybody will be able to participate in the 1986 Christmas Bird Count. **Saturday, December 20** is the date set for our fourth annual count for the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society. We hope to make it a bigger event than last year's "banner year." So let's start planning early.

The first thing to do is to sign up for the count at one of the regular Audubon Society meetings or to contract Ruth Sager so that the teams can be lined up. You may choose to help in one of ten sections mapped out within the 15-mile diameter circle with its center in Hollsopple.

Birding in Johnstown and its suburbs account for large numbers of birds, including the counting of crows as they come to roost in the vicinity of Stackhouse Park, although the number of species may be somewhat limited. Getting out into the country in such areas as Upper Yoder, Richland and Conemaugh Townships will turn up more species of birds that live in woodlands, fields, and marshy habitats. Waterfowl can be depended on to linger around North Fork Dam, Quemahoning Dam, and Stoughton Lake. Species which find their food in fields and fencerows will be found in country settings around such places as Thomas Mills, Boswell, Davidsville, Stoustown, Windber, and Scalp Level. Woodlands throughout the count area will be good for owls, woodpeckers, juncos and a variety of other songbirds. Mountain habitat is to be found in the two points of highest elevation, in the western sector near Laurel Run Scout Camp and in the Babcock region in the east. There is variety in habitat and variety in species of birds wintering in our territory. Let's work together to see what we can find.



But if you can not get out in the field for the count, keep reading.....

As usual, we urge you to make a special effort to spend some night hours out looking and listening for owls. A number of our members now have owl tapes and they may be used to advantage by owling parties. The owl count should be much better for our area than we have indicated in our first three yearly efforts.

Still not volunteering??? Now read this! We are planning a little innovation for our feeder-watchers this year. Whether you plan to go out on the count or whether you want to stay home and count birds at your feeder, or whether you can do neither, you can enlist other feeder-watchers. If everyone will spot feeders in advance, contact the homeowners and ask them to make their own count for the day, and then collect the completed lists for us, we can add greatly to the Christmas Bird Count Coverage. Forms for this will be available at Audubon meetings, or a simple list may be submitted containing name and address of watchers, and number of birds for each species seen.

A briefing meeting of a pep rally nature will be held at the Richland Veterinary Hospital (2nd floor) on December 11 at 7 p.m.. Its purpose will be to line up teams for the count, receive instructions and tips for conducting the count, and receive help for identification, etc.

We are invited again to share the warmth of Tom and Sally Dick's home at 1003 Eisenhower Blvd. at the close of Count Day on Saturday, December 20. Their Christmas parties are well worth any winter weather you may brave during the day. The tally of birds will go on as you chat with one another and sip and dine on the goodies offered by the Dicks.

Let the record for 1985 of 19,948 individual birds of 62 species fall in 1986!

Ruth Sager
R.D.1, Box 176-B
Hooversville, Pa. 15939
798-3242

Where are the birds on Christmas Count Day??

Doubtlessly, this question influences where Auduboners do their winter count. "Last year I had Snowbird township and we didn't see a thing," mutters a malcontent, "and so this year I'm taking Avitown Dam where we should get lots of action." Later this conversation might change to "Avitown Dam wasn't good this year" or "Lets make sure we get Snowbird township again next year." I'm sure that some (myself included) forget that birds aren't exactly dripping from trees on the annual Christmas Bird Count. Its all very relative, especially when you consider the variables. Lets consider the following: seasonal abundance, food and cover, wind, and temperature.

The fall migration carries some 70% of our summer birds south leaving only a skeleton crew and a handfull of year-round residents behind. This group is bolstered by some northern birds that consider us southern. The northern birds consist mostly of waterfowl, finches and raptors. None are dependable; the waterfowl may have moved on, the finches may not come this year and the raptors were always spotty. This might be the only time of you'll appreciate Starlings and House Sparrows. The Allegheny Plateau rarely bestows more than a 50 species day although 90 is theoretically possible. Peak Winter counts hinge on a strange grouping of events such as a late winter, poor northern cone crop, collapse in arctic rodent population, location of the jet stream and, perhaps, the phase of the moon. Before starting out remember that winter is a time of scarcity, this scarcity should not be considered humdrum since some birds will only be found in the winter.

Food and cover, although often discussed, is often misunderstood. Both are necessary but not found necessarily in the same place. Food, an essential ingredient of survival, takes the form of seeds, cones, last fall's fruits, hibernating insects, buds, submergent plants and the list goes on. Feeding for most bird starts early in the morning. Many feed in shifts with the Cardinals among the earliest and Woodpeckers the latest. Following feeding periods birds go to their preferred cover to escape winter winds or predation. Roosts and cover are sometimes the same and they vary with the species; cover to the Chickadee might just be a cavity in a tree, the cardinal likes grapevine entanglements, doves like Evergreens, Winter Wrens like ravines, and starlings like buildings. Feed and cover are the same when they're dense honeysuckle, greenbrier, Multiflora Rose, Poison Ivy or wild grape. So, in the morning look for birds feeding; find the food crop. Later in the day, when birds are less active, work your way through evergreens and brushy thickets. The alternative is to walk miles of fields and woods without any feathered activity.



Weather is the final arbiter of the day's success. Winter winds make birds evaporate and freezing rains change them to stone. Windy days also drive birds to protective cover near the ground. Under these conditions they're less active and especially difficult to see. Each leaf appears to be sneaking (bird-like) through the tree. Songs, calls, scratching and eating sounds, all important in locating birds, are lost to the rustling leaves. The leaves even rule the skies. Raptors and other birds are grounded. Waterfowl hug the leeward shores and are hard to see in the rocking waves and breaking water.

Temperature can affect birding in the following ways: stimulate appetite, change appearance, increase thirst, and concentrate birds. Cold weather causes birds to eat more to raise metabolic heat. Along with increasing heat production is added heat conservation by feather puffing. Feather puffing creates air spaces which acts as insulation between feathers; this winter trick makes them look fluffy and larger. Along with these mechanisms is a simple need for water which at this time is often tied up in the form of ice and snow. Water seeps or springs that haven't frozen are good locations to find small birds drinking and feeding. Birds prefer water over eating snow or ice. A feeding station can be much more productive by taking advantage of this need with a source of heated water nearby. Prolonged freezing temperatures eliminate open water in lakes and dams and can bring a temporary halt to viewing waterfowl. Occasionally, springs, winds, or currents keep small pockets of water open, usually in the same location each year, and they can concentrate waterfowl.

But this seasonal uncertainty combined with brisk winds and good companionship results in the thrill of being afield searching out these most animated creatures of nature. On the flip side, good weather, unusual birds, good concentrations, and plenty of counters drive anticipation to feverish levels.

Submitted by Thomas Dick

Did you know that.....

.....your Audubon Society has nesting box plans for bats? Many bats are nonmigratory preferring to overwinter or raise young in caves, rock crevices, tree cavities, or buildings. Since bats are such a vital part of nature's diversity and also on the decline why not build a bat box.

.....the American Eel can be still found in many of Pennsylvania's streams. The eel spends some 8 to 10 years of its life in these streams before mating and then migrating down stream into saltwater bays such as the Delaware or Chesapeake. From there they migrate to the Sargassum sea which is south of Bermuda where they deposit their eggs. The larva begin migrating, changing into elvers from 2 to 3 inches long, and arrive at our streams after about a year. They somehow manage to climb and crawl the waterway inconveniences to reach ancestral stream bottom.

.....the circular fibers in a spider web are sticky while the ones radiating out like the spokes of a wheel are dry and these are the ones the spider walks on to capture its prey.

.....The Barn Owl, Tyto alba, derives its common name from its frequent choice of man-made structures for nesting and roosting. It is physically distinguished by its heart-shaped face and white-colored breast. A nocturnal predator, the Barn Owl possesses extraordinary senses of sight and hearing and the ability to fly almost soundlessly. Small rodents are its favored prey. Unlike other owls which hoot, the Barn Owl screeches. The life span is relatively short; few adults live beyond 3-4 years. They are federally protected and also endangered or threatened in many states. Presently, they are being studied; if you find one please notify Ruth Sager, Tom Dick or Mike Sankovich so the information can be relayed to the Pa. study team.

Flock to Allegheny Plateau Audubon's Annual Bird Seed Sale

Top Quality Seed At Tuckload Prices

50 lb. Wild Bird Seed: \$9.50 ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~ ~~\$12.50~~
50 lb. Gray Stripe Sunflower: \$11.00
1 lb. Niger (thistle): .90



Proceeds support:

Establishing Bluebird Trails
Mountain Hawk Watch
Programs and Outings
Lectures and Education programs
Supporting 8 schools with "Audubon Adventure Series"
Christmas Bird Counts
Breeding Bird Surveys
Newsletters
Environmental Action

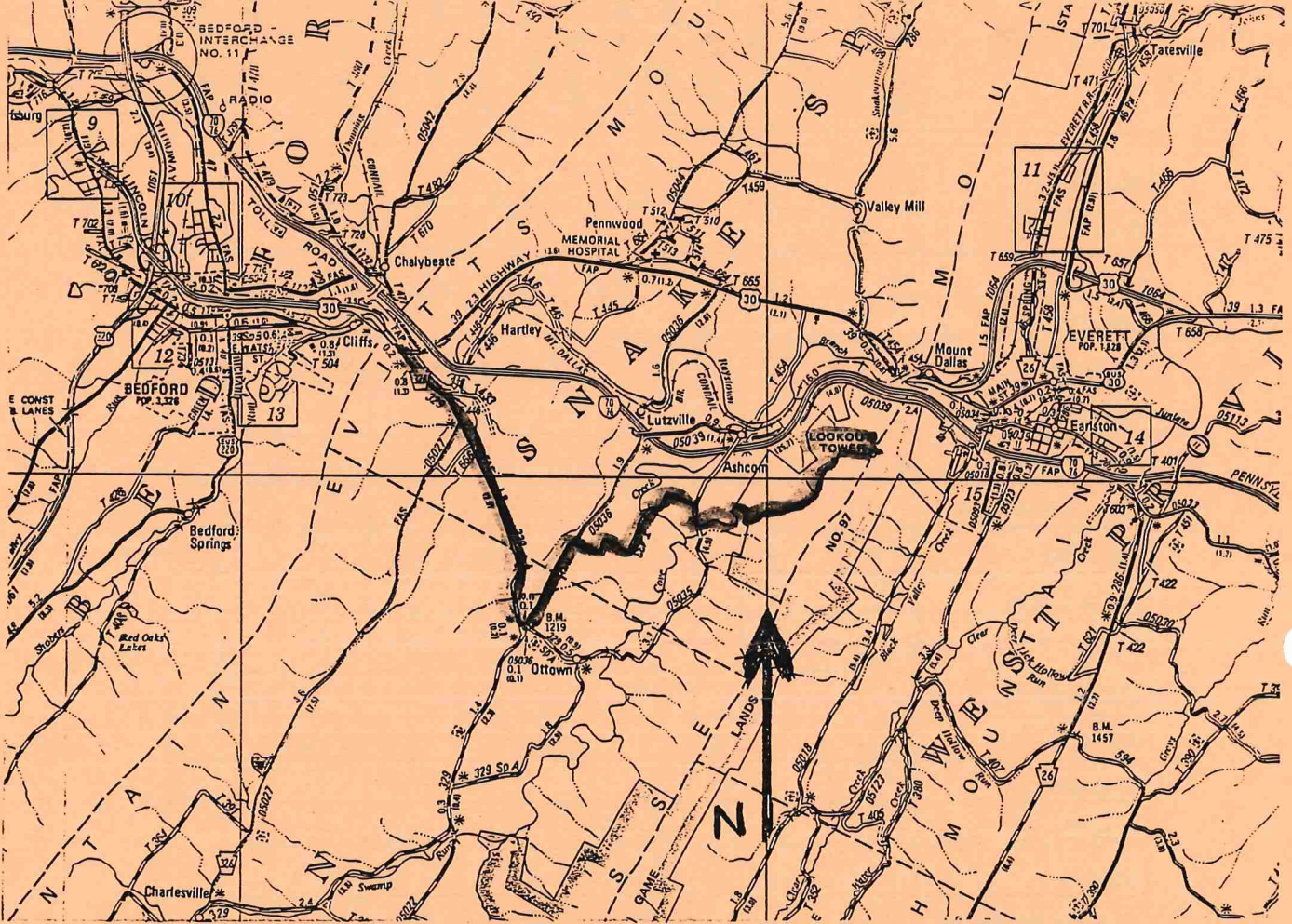
Order now by calling **Stuver's Riverside Nursery at 288-1759** or stop in Monday to Saturday between 9 and 4. You can also order and pick up at **Audubon Meetings**. The next meeting is **November 20, at UPJ room 240 Krebs**. After November the next meeting dates are January 15, February 19, and March 16 for birdseed sales.

Our birdseed sale represents an important part of our income and your support is not only appreciated but vital to our maintaining the many programs of environmental action.

Allegheny Plateau
Audubon Society
Recommendations

	How to Feed								What to Feed							
	On the ground	on tree trunks	above ground	tray type feeders	hanging feeders, plastic	hanging feeders, wooden	hanging feeders, thistle	hanging bag or net	Sunflower, Gray Striped	Wild Bird Seed	Peanut hearts	Niger Seed	Suet Bells, with seeds	Plain suet	Peanut Butter w/ Corn Meal	Raisens, apples
Blue Jay	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓						
Brown Creeper		✓														
Cardinal	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓						
Carolina Wren			✓									✓	✓			
Chickadee				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Cowbird	✓			✓					✓	✓						
Mourning Dove	✓								✓							
Evening Grosbeak				✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Goldfinch	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				
House Finch	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓							
Junco	✓								✓							
Mockingbird	✓			✓											✓	
Nuthatch		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			
Pheasant	✓								✓							
Pine Siskin	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				
Redpole	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓				✓				
Redwing Blackbird	✓			✓						✓					✓	✓
Robin	✓														✓	
All Sparrows	✓			✓					✓							
Titmouse				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Towhee	✓															✓
Squirrels	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Woodpeckers					✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			

Tussey Mountain Update: Many of the members are unaware of the directions to the hawkwatch. Now you have no excuse. See the map below. From U.S.30 East, from Bedford turn South on PA 326 and follow shaded route to the point marked lookout tower. The last right turn from OS035 is a dirt road, and access with vehicle is restricted past the gate without a permit, or accompanying a regular with one. Arrangements can be made by contacting either myself or Tom Dick.



Large flights of Broadwings didn't materialize during the month of September, but in spite of that, numbers are up from last year. Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawks made up for their absence during October. Peregrines and Merlins came in about equal numbers of nine, and Red-shouldered hawks were in ample supply.

With only about four weeks remaining this year, it is my hope that more of the members would take this opportunity to come to the hawkwatch. This month will provide the opportunity of seeing Golden Eagles, Harriers, Redtails, Goshawks and maybe our first Rough-legged Hawks. Don't be intimidated by thinking that you don't know one hawk from another. Just six years ago, I didn't either. The Tussey Hawkwatch isn't just for experts. It is also an educational arm of your Audubon Chapter. We are there, not just counting hawks but are more than happy to teach you the high-points of identification. November also brings with it large flights of Tundra Swans and Canada Geese. Dont let the regulars keep all of these birds to themselves. Come up and steal some glimpses for yourselves. Dont let me say (when I see that next eagle) "Boy! I wish there was someone else up here to see this.

Submitted by Michael A. Sankovich

Ed. note: The following editorial was stimulated in part by the negative attitude some local sportsman have toward birds of prey and by the recent Hawk Mountain predator-Prey conference in which it was discovered that certain groups (Unified Sportsman,) would like to see the killing of Horned Owls and Red-tailed Hawks legalized.

Speaking out

Two years ago a Horned Owl and a Barred Owl were in the rehabilitation clinic because of injuries to the extremities. Two weeks later Dr. Dick was telephoned and told of Beagle Clubs that were using pole traps (pole + steel trap). I decided, and Dr. Dick agreed, that we should attempt to change the attitudes of these Beagle Clubs in some convincing educational way. I turned to the literature. In reading "Birds of Western Pennsylvania" by W. E. Todd, a book written in 1933, I was surprised to read the clear thinking and understanding this author had for predators in the proper balance of wildlife. He knew predators were essential to nature and he vilified the laws spawned in ignorance like the infamous "Scalp Act" which placed a bounty on every hawk and owl killed in Pennsylvania. In his day he knew these acts were not only useless but costly and destructive as well. Depredation acts, I thought, were buried in the archives of human error but instead they are still being considered.

One of the hardest things to understand about the important role predators play in an ecosystem is the food web. The complexity of a food web is best seen by an example brought out by the National Wildlife Federation's, Dr. Doug Miller. He did a study in Alabama, on the effect of bobcat on quail populations. He concluded that as opportunists bobcat will eat quail but the majority of their diet is the Cotton Rat. Cotton rats are a main source of quail nest predation and destruction. Therefore, the bobcat not only wasn't hurting the quail population, he was probably helping it.



Hunters and nonhunters alike need to join together in a mutual education campaign to understand wildlife ecology before trying to legislate its change. We need to understand that raptors aren't the reason for game species decline but rather the encroachment of man. Encroachment means habitat destruction. Habitat destruction occurs insidiously under a variety of guises such as development, over-farming, and mining. Farms, in particular, no longer benefit small game due to the following: insecticide and herbicide usage, efficient harvesting machinery, destruction of fence rows, and wetland drainage which leaves little food or cover for wildlife. A bright spot on the horizon is the 1985 Farm Bill which pays farmers to put non-productive land into wildlife habitat. As conservationists we should concentrate on habitat and back the political processes that support good wildlife habitat.

I feel the evidence favors the protection and perpetuation of predators and proves their benefits in preserving healthy game populations, including game species, and without the misguided efforts of predatory control. Predator importance stems far beyond localized ecosystem dependence since many predators are migratory.

The second busiest season for the rehabilitation clinic has just begun. The fall migratory season brings us many raptors. Unfortunately, fall migration and small game season overlap, we hope this years cases are accidental rather than intentional. Certainly with good legislation like the farm bill and good eco-education they could be.

Submitted by Tim Fox

Our Audubon Chapter is now supporting 8 schools with the "Audubon Adventure Series." This series may be the only ecologic exposure elementary children receive and our chapter should be proud of this educational accomplishment. This is due to the fine work of our Education Chairman, **Joe Emerick**. Joe reports that 9 other schools would like to be supported. Unfortunately, the series costs \$40.00 to \$60.00 per school and unless we receive outside funds additional support will be impossible. **Any Ideas???**

Ron Rovansek, an active auduboner and hawk counter for the society, is attending the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. He reported one of the highlights at the school is encountered during lunch when the sun rises and sets while eating. Fairbanks Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count last year counted 25 species with a certain number logged by dogsled.

Tom Dick was recently honored by the Headwaters Chapter of the Sierra Club. He also received the "Outstanding Sportsman and Conservationist of the year" award presented by the Cambria County Federation of Sportsman Clubs, Inc.

Eight members attended the **Birds of Prey and Small Game conference** at Hawk Mountain while 5 almost didn't make it home due to 2 flat tires at midnight on the Pennsylvania turnpike. Apparently, the driver (who wished to remain anonymous) owns a van with whales painted on the side, had a flat spare tire. Topping that off was a dead battery as well.

Mike Sankovich attended the regional Audubon conference at Slippery Rock college and has brought back information on chapter improvement ideas. Dr. Doris Brown will be presenting a lecture/slide presentation to the **Garden Club** and Tom Dick will be presenting a program for the **Juniata Audubon Society**.

Dave Mikesic, our photography chairman, has organized a five minute section for each meeting in which members show some of their favorite nature slides. During the October meeting we had the pleasure of seeing some of Dave's slides of flowers and Bruce Courter's macrophotographs of silk streaming out of the spinneret of spiders.

Upcoming Programs and Outings

Remember our programs are either held in the Engineering and Science Auditorium or Room 240 in Krebs Hall. They are always held at **UPJ** and they are always the **third thursday** of each month with the **exception** of December, June, July, and August.

November 8, at 9p.m. -- will be an outing to the Tussey Mountain Hawk Watch to count Red-tailed hawks, Northern Harriers, and with a little luck: Golden Eagles. This trip will be led by Mike Sankovich. Meet at 8:30 in the Parking lot of the Richland Veterinary Hospital. Please notify Mike by calling 288-2304 if you plan to attend.

November 20, at 8 p.m. will be a slide/lecture presentation on our National Parks by Mike and Laura Jackson. Both Laura and Mike are teachers and excellent naturalists/photographers. They are also active in both the Allegheny Plateau Audubon and Juniata Audubon. In addition to the excellent program we will also have elections and birdseed sales this evening so make sure you attend. This is also a good time to sign up for the Christmas Bird Count.

December 11, -- Pre-Christmas Count get together at 7 p.m. at the second floor of the Richland Veterinary Hospital. Final assignments of locations, trip leaders, and other details of the Dec. 20 count. Ruth Sager is the leader/compiler.

December 20, Christmas Bird Count -- we already have received reliable reports of northern finches, specifically Pine Siskins, flocking in our area as early as October 26. Early Christmas counts are usually higher due to the overlap of migrants and resident birds.

January 11, --An afternoon of photographing local winter scenes. Scenic areas such as Babcock State Park, Pleasantville Mountain, Clearshade, and others. Any type of camera will do. Contact Dave Mikesic at 266-7620 for questions or signup.

January 15 Meeting: A special presentation on the bear introduction program in Pennsylvania. This presentation will be by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

January 24, a trip to Muddy Run and Conewingo Dam to see the largest overwintering population of Bald Eagles in Pennsylvania. This is also a good time for wintering waterfowl. Contact Mike Sankovich at 288-2304. This will be a one day outing with car-pooling starting from the Richland Veterinary Hospital. Be at the hospital at 6 a.m. This is an excellent opportunity for photography.

January 25, --A 2 hour camera outing to the Sager's home to photograph common winter birds at an extremely active feeder. The photographs can be taken through glass windows or close to the feeder. Expect up to 15 species. Contact Dave Mikesic at 266-7620 for signup.

February 5 to Feb. 8--Delmarva Winter Wildlife Outing with Tom Dick. A look at the birds and mammals of our coastal wildlife refuges. Locations to be visited are Bombay Hook NWR, Little Creek Wildlife Management Area, Indian River Inlet, Chincoteague NWR, and Blackwater NWR. Other locations will be included. A full weekend of wind, surf, and wildlife with many unusual species anticipated. Contact Tom Dick for details at 266-7912. Anyone wishing to go should notify Tom before January 20 so arrangements can be made.

February 19 meeting: An exciting evening with Jerry Hassinger, a non-game Biologist with the Pennsylvania Game Commission. This will be a slide/lecture presentation on the Pennsylvania Elk Herd.

February 28 outing: A crash one day trip to the Chesapeake for waterfowl, eagles, and unusual gulls. The trip will visit Sandy Point State Park, Choptank River, Blackwater NWR, and other locations where wildlife congregates. Leave from the Richland Veterinary Hospital at 5 a.m. and return by 10 (we may take time out for a constellation stop). Contact Tom Dick at 266-7912

March 19 meeting: Slide/lecture presentation by Mike Ondik. Mike is a well known rehabilitator, lecturer, and naturalist. For years, Mike worked with the Penn State Deer Herd.

March Outing: Spring Waterfowl: We will have morning trips to the following areas: Quemahoning Dam, Lasky's pond, Samii's Swamp, Somerset Lake, and Shawnee State park. If you have never seen this spectacle than join up with us. During this peak period almost all varieties of North American waterfowl may be seen in their beautiful breeding plumage. We will try to have outings on every weekend during this month. Consult the Tribune Democrat for Details. Times, locations, and trip leaders will vary.

April 16: Meeting to be announced

April 18: Spring Hawk Watch with Mike Sankovich. This is the time when deflected wind from the ridges supports the return of Ospreys, Eagles, and other raptors. An always successful outing (weather dependent, of course). The location will be Tussey Mountain. Contact Mike at 288-2304

Astronomy outings: At the last meeting we've had 4 signups for celestial viewing but, alas, no outings. The reason is wet, cloudy weather or a clear night coinciding with a full moon. We will be going out only on those nights which are crystal clear and everyone can go. With little doubt, those signups will have good opportunity to see the seasonal constellations, meteor showers, and other astronomical events of importance. Anyone else wanting to join up should notify either Kevin Georg or Tom Dick at the next meeting.



Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society Executive Board as of November 19

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266-7812

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266-2734

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