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## The Newsletter of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society

### From the President

The Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society (APAS) is heading for a transitional patch. Many of the founding members, who have been the backbone of the organization, are taking a step back from their current roles that will need to be filled by the next generation. The passing of the founder Tom Dick is emblematic of this. To stay functional, the APAS needs several replacements for board members, for hawk counters, and for general volunteering.

Our organization is more than the wonderful individuals who started the organization. They set out a mission of educating, conserving, and passing on the bug of celebrating the wonders of nature.

The founders paved the path but are now needing some extra time to take care of themselves. Without them there would be no APAS, Allegheny Hawkwatch, Dunning;s Creek Wetlands, Johnstown's Christmas Bird Count, Owl Banding, etc.

What we need now is for others to follow in their footsteps and take on the roles and responsibilities of running the board, continuing the hawk counting, being the leaders for our various activities, leading the clean-up crew, being in charge of maintenance, etc.

Getting involved may seem like a lot of work, however, study after study shows that those who volunteer for something bigger than themselves are less prone to depression, live happier and healthier lives, and gain status in their communities. Being part of our organization allows all of us to learn from one another, share our thoughts and ideas, and most importantly, help others understand the intricacies of the natural world, which is another way to stave off negative effects as we age.

If you have not stepped up before, it is your time! We need you...and maybe...you need us.



Photo by Brian M. Wargo

Tom Dick - founder of the APAS (1941-2022)

*Brian M. Wargo*

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# Tom Dick – APAS Founder - (1941 - 2022)

By Brian M. Wargo

In the mid-eighties, Tom Dick and other hawkwatchers were counting hawks at Tussey Mountain in Bedford County, Pennsylvania about 50 miles south of what is currently called Tussey Mountain Hawk Watch. They were searching all over the Bedford/Somerset County landscape for places where hawks were flying. Naturally, the ridges were the best areas. However, the land was always owned by someone else, meaning that there was the possibility of getting kicked off the property. And that is what happened. After going through this process a few times, Tom was ready to take action.

Tom regularly visited one of his childhood neighbors from Johnstown, Colonel Gage, whose cottage was adjacent to the property of what is now known as the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch. The views were spectacular, and Tom had noticed that the hawks were traveling through this western part of the flyway. When the adjacent property came up for sale, Tom bought it.

He excitedly wrote to his birding constituents of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society (APAS), which he founded a few years earlier. This letter was later reprinted in the Chickadee Chatter, the official newsletter of the APAS, both around 1997 and just recently before his passing. In the letter, Tom stated that the 6-acre property was situated on the edge of the Allegheny Plateau, with the overlook giving excellent views of the raptors as they migrated. The point of the letter was to find hawkwatchers who were willing to count. He explained that several members were needed and that they could choose their preferred days. The goal was to count every day of the migration season.



Tom Dick wearing an Allegheny Front Hawk Watch shirt and hat.

Directions to the lookout were given in the newsletter as was the combination to the gate that was at the road access. He then gave his address and phone number for anyone who was interested in hawkwatching or just needed a weather update, stating that he and his wife Sally were up by 5:30 a.m. each morning. During this time, Tom was also getting insurance on the land and devising plans for how to clear the site for hawk viewing, all while trying to keep its magical feel. In these early days, talk also centered around making a platform or an elevated deck to help spot the birds. The idea was soon dropped due to legal and financial considerations.

With lots of charisma and maybe a bit of charm, Tom soon had a small army of volunteers helping to make the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch what it is today...a place of beauty, peace, and a great spot to count migrating raptors. This does not mean that everything was smooth sailing or that Tom was a pushover...he was not! Tom could and would fight with anyone, from neighbors to the energy companies. Anything that impeded raptor flight, or the counting of these birds, was fair game. Several legal battles were fought to keep the wind industry from putting turbines along these ridges, a place that has been verified to have a large concentration of migrating Golden Eagles.

Tom led the way for conserving the Allegheny Mountains not just by his lip service, but also his wallet. Legal fees and legal fights cost money, enough to where most people would simply accept the bitter outcome. But not Tom! He organized and he won. Not just on the legal front, but also with the community. He gained the reputation of being a strong advocate for the locals, the land, and the ecosystem.

Describing Tom as an environmentalist is much too simple. He was an independent thinker and often cited the science instead of his opinions. But again, that does not mean he did not have opinions...he did, and he could voice them. Tom seemed to be caught between having grandiose visions and being grounded to reality. This might be explained by his training as a veterinarian, where helping people with their animals some days made him into a healer, while other days as someone who ultimately ended suffering.

Breathing life back into the old is a trick that medicine men were known to do. Tom did this metaphorically when he reincarnated an old and dilapidated farm into what is now known as Dunnings Creek Wetlands. This mecca for wildlife is one of the great success stories of conservation in Pennsylvania. It came about because Tom ponied up and took control of the land in a joint agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture. In what has become normalized as a contract between the Federal government and private landowners, this radical idea of creating a marshland in the middle of Pennsylvania was anything but a sure thing decades ago. Even the neighbors were skeptical of this idea, but after seeing the conversion from a wasteland into one of the most pristine marshlands that was attracting species not seen before in this area, Tom's legend grew as fast as the native flora. Volunteers were now planting buttonbush along the banks of the dozen or so pools that were now hosting waterfowl, amphibians, and reptiles.

Tom always seemed to be ahead of everyone, including signing up for the new HawkCount.org, which at the turn of the century, was the new method for entering data into Hawk Migration Association of North America's (HMANA's) database. Tom made the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch the fifth hawk watch site to register. As HawkCount became more popular, the Allegheny Front was always the default on the website since the listings were alphabetized. And if you looked at the Official Counter at the Allegheny Front, you would often see the name Tom Dick. He continued taking a day of the week at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch up until just a few years ago.

My time at the Allegheny Front started in 2009, but it was some years before I really spoke with Tom. Most of my knowledge of him came from others at the hawk site. Everyone had a story about Tom, sometimes funny, sometimes serious, but usually centered on wildlife. Of course, there were those that disagreed or had different ideas than Tom, but he was the undisputed leader. When Tom made a decision or a ruling...that is what it was going to be. He was

the founder of the Audubon chapter, the landowner and primary overseer of both the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch and the Dunning's Creek Wetlands, which was a job he took to heart. When issues of convenience butted against what was best for the environment...the environment always took precedence. Everyone knew the way Tom thought! That gave the organization, the properties, and the hawk counting stability.

In the middle part of the last decade, as I began my ascent in both HMANA and Audubon, Tom and I worked more closely. Tom was enthusiastic about my new roles. Partially because he and so many of the other founders had been working so hard for so long that it was nice to have someone younger, enthusiastic, and dedicated coming in and taking over. Despite his age, Tom was still in great shape. He was still running miles each day and conducting bird surveys, especially down at the wetlands. Up until a few years ago, Tom was still an active hawk counter. But it seemed to be getting harder and harder for him. While his body was still in its prime, his mind was beginning to struggle.

It should go without saying that when I say Tom Dick, I really mean Tom and Sally, for his wife was an integral part of everything that happened with the hawk watch and the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society. Over the last few years, most of my conversations with the Dick's were with Sally, whose genuineness and kindness were steadfast. She spoke more and more for Tom and eventually passed the torch to her son Chris, who is now a very active board member of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society and is the acting steward of the land. Some have said that Chris reminds them of Tom when he was younger. I think this is so because Chris is bright, good natured, and concerned with keeping the properties perpetually protected, mirroring what I had always heard about his dad.

My memories of Tom are blended with the tales that I heard about him as well as from a couple of old videotapes that captured the younger Tom, who was always smiling and making sure everyone was happy. Even the older Tom would sometimes scold me for taking my duties too seriously, saying, "It's about having fun...stop being so serious about all of this." These were interesting words coming from a man who took being a guardian of the environment earnestly. But that is the conundrum of Tom, and maybe all of us...it is hard to pin any of us down to our essential being. I wrote a chapter of a hawkwatching book about Tom, titling it "Tom—The Zen Master." When people read it, they said that they learned things about Tom that they did not know before. And that title is apt because Tom was so layered that he was difficult to characterize. But if I had to, I think it would be as a man who loved nature and was willing to dedicate his existence towards protecting it in any way possible.

Tom died the day before the annual picnic of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society, which was held on July 31, 2022. The death was unexpected. The society always holds its annual in-person meeting before eating lunch. Before we began the meeting, I gathered everyone's attention and started by announcing to those who had not heard, that Tom had passed. As I did, something else unexpected happened...I lost my voice and had to restart. I had great respect for Tom and spoke with him about important matters. I guess I underestimated how much he actually meant to me as someone else who is passionate and dedicates time to preserving nature. From the correspondence that I am getting from other serious individuals in other organizations, I have a feeling that many others also feel this way about Tom.

Tom Dick's legacy is set as a hawkwatcher, a conservationist, and a powerful force for the environment. He will be missed, but those who have been influenced by him will carry on his vision.

Brian M. Wargo – APAS President

## Christmas Bird Count

By Jeff Payne

The 2022 Christmas Bird Count had 27 participants this year. Also, a big "Thank You" to all who braved the day and who also helped with the count week birds. It was a rather challenging day with temps from 20-27 F, winds up to 15mph and snowflakes blowing around almost all day. This did make feeders active but caused some birds to hunker down. Our day count was 60 species, which was a little lower than most years when we average about 65. However, we had 75 for the count week (CW) which was a good number. Special thanks to all who kept looking for the three days before and after our one-day count. Another special thanks for the owling effort. Kudos to Deb for her 2-hour effort. The day itself was not very good for owls calling but we got three for the week.

Our CW tally of 16 waterfowl was pretty good as large storms were pushing birds around. The Snow and Greater White-fronted geese, Wood Ducks, Green-winged Teal and Common Goldeneye certainly made us smile. It was appropriate that we got eight raptors with all our hawk watchers out. The high-flying dark morph Rough-legged (thanks Meg) and a flushed, feeding Red-shouldered were nice finds.

The count week Ruffed Grouse was special—20 years ago multiples were expected. The flicker and sapsucker were nice finds, if we could just have had Mike L. here to conjure up a Red-headed we would have run the woodpeckers.

The Flight 93 Northern Shrike was a very hard-won bird, an auto barricade necessitated a 2.5 mile walk in the windiest, coldest spot around, but the bird put in an appearance.



Photo by Tom Kuehl

Horned lark photographed during the CBC.

Who would have believed 115 Robins and 31 Bluebirds a couple decades ago? We used to be happy getting a couple. Almost everyone got to enjoy Horned Larks this year, but none of their rarer comrades seemed to be around. Lastly, 8 sparrow species was nice with good numbers of American Tree Sparrows this year and 479 Juncos being a high number. The Savannah sparrow who popped up twice in a large sparrow flock was nice and 2 teams finding White-crowned was also quite good.

So, again, a hearty Thank You to all who participated! Next year we'll have a follow up tally party of some sort!

# 2022 Allegheny Front Hawk Watch Fall Count

By Bob Stewart - (AFHW Compiler)

The watch commenced on August 15th and continued through December 30th. The watch was manned for 720.25 hours, near the 5-year average. The total raptor count for the season was 8009. This calculates to 11.1 raptors per hour. When broad-winged hawks are subtracted the season total is 4191, with 5.8 raptors per hour, a 42 per cent increase over 2021.

There were two season high records set this year. Bald Eagles once again set a new high number of 261. This broke the old record of 246 set in 2019. The Golden Eagle count of 345 this year surpassed the existing record of 320 in 2015.

Black Vulture migrants numbered 7 individuals, a 23 year low. Our Black Vulture numbers may be lower than in the past due to more scrutiny. Many believe we see the same individuals repeatedly during the season. The Turkey Vulture count of 495 is double the average for the previous three years.

Sharp-shinned Hawk and Cooper's Hawk numbers continue to rebound from the low counts of 2020. There were 1110 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 147 Cooper's Hawks recorded this fall.

Two Northern Goshawks were recorded this fall. On October 23, 2022, a juvenile and on November 4, 2022, an adult. Osprey numbered 46, well below the five-year average of 79. There were 33 Northern Harriers, at the five-



Photo by Dave Poder

© David Poder

A Northern Harrier passes the site.

year average. Red-shouldered Hawks numbered 55. This is 31% above the five-year average. A nice showing of Red-tailed Hawks with 1479, 42% over the five-year average.

The Broad-winged Hawks did not have an epic flight this year. Only 3838 Broad-winged Hawks were recorded, nearly 5,000 below the five-year average. After an absence last year, Rough-legged Hawks made an appearance.

A rough-legged was recorded on November 7, 2023, and November 21, 2023. The falcon flight was a mixed bag. The Peregrine Falcon flight of 16 was about half the five-year average. The Merlin migrants numbered 32, exceeding the five-year average by 33%. American Kestrel numbered 56, near the five-year average

MONTHLY RECAP AUGUST- Only 51 Broad-winged Hawks migrated in the 2-week period with 101 observation hours. This was the lowest number of migrants since 1998 (with only 60 observation hours). The total raptor count for the period was 151, the lowest number since the year 2000 (with 35 observation hours).

SEPTEMBER - The Broad-wing Hawk migration resulted in 3767 migrants. While this number is not unusual it's 3,000 to 12,000 below the previous four years that had large numbers. September 9, 2022, was a warm day, partly cloudy skies with a moderate wind out of the ESE. The counter for the day was Ed Gowarty, Sr. There were 49 Bald Eagles migrating through on that day, a new daily record. The Bald Eagle count for the month was 156 the second highest on record. Ed also counted 154 Broad-winged Hawks, 11 Red-tailed Hawks, 4 American Kestrel, 1 Peregrine Falcon, 2 Osprey, 5 Sharp-shinned Hawks, and 6 Cooper's Hawks.

OCTOBER - There were three species with significant counts. Red-shouldered Hawks numbered 34, Red-tailed Hawks 902, and Merlins 25. All these represent ten- year highs for the month. As a note there were thirteen days with an east component wind.

NOVEMBER - A new November high count for Golden Eagles was set with a count of 206. Bald Eagles numbered 26. This was the second highest on record (36 in 2021). Peregrines numbered three which tied the record of 2018. There were three Merlins, the second highest number (4 in 2012).

DECEMBER- There were 81.5 observation hours during the month, the highest in seven years. 89 Golden Eagles migrated, shattering the record of 49 set in 2021. 9 sharp-shinned hawks were counted-breaking the record of three set in multiple years. Total raptors numbered 135. All these numbers were greater than during the last 25 years.

This year we lost another counter, Tom Dick. He passed on July 30, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Sally, and children, Chris, Kelly, and Kim. Tom originally organized the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Chapter of Audubon and established hawk watch sites including the purchase of the current site on Shaffer Mountain. He has interacted and influenced many persons over the year. He will assist us now from his hawk watch above in heaven.

Our counters for this year were Deb Bodenschatz, Erika Bowman, Ed Gowarty, Sr., Rosemary McGlynn, Dave Poder, Jim Rocco, Wayne Sierer, Bob Stewart, and Brian Wargo. Their great effort contributes to the ongoing success of the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch.

On a final note, in order to continue there is an immediate need for more qualified counters. Please contact Bob Stewart or any of the counters to express an interest. If needed a counter can work with you and improve your skill set. You would be welcomed to the ridgetop.

# Owling at the APAS

By Adam Katrancha

Most of the visitors to the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch come for the spectacular views of the valley below and, of course, the eagles, hawks, falcons and vultures. For most, the perfect day will be sunny, or maybe overcast with a few clouds (to ease eye strain), with an easterly wind to help steer the birds towards the escarpment. However, most of these visitors will have left before sunset and are thinking warm thoughts when the hawk watch's second shift arrives.

The second shift consists of a small group of dedicated volunteers that arrive as the skies darken on October and November weekends. This group, headed by Dave Darney, comes to the Front, like the other hawk counters and volunteers, to participate in the citizen science pursuits of monitoring migrating raptors. However, the night quarry are owls, primarily the Northern Saw-whet (*Aegolius acadicus*), and in addition to counting, the owls are aged, sexed and banded.

Much like the raptors counted during the day, the Saw-whets are being monitored, with data shared internationally, to track population trends and migratory patterns. Why the Northern Saw-Whet? With some variation attributed to winter harshness and food supplies, Northern Saw-whets are some of the most consistent migrating owls. And the wooded Allegheny Front serves as an ideal corridor for their travels. Other common owls, like the Eastern Screech Owl and Barred Owl are more territorial and not migrants. So, monitoring a static site, like the hawk watch, would yield the reoccurring birds local to the area.

The Northern Saw-whet owl is the smallest owl in Pennsylvania at only 7-8 inches and weighing between 2-5 ounces.



Photo by Adam Katrancha

Jeanine Ging and Dave Darney set up the nets at the hawk watch as dusk approaches.

Unlike raptor counting during the day, monitoring owls at night requires very different equipment and skills. Since visual observation is impractical at night, mist nets are erected to capture the owls as they pass through the area, beckoned with an electronic call. But not everyone can net owls. Dave has spent over 30 years as a certified bander, is properly permitted by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and knows the proper and safe techniques to capture, handle, band, and release the birds. Jeanine Ging, who has served as Dave's sub-bander for the past 3 years, also assists in the process. Wayne Sierer and Ed Gowarty, Jr. are the other regular assistants for the nocturnal activities.

As would be expected, specialized equipment is needed to safely capture the owls. Mist nets, which can be visualized as fine threaded volleyball nets, stretching from ground level to nearly 10' high, are erected along forest edges and through the trees adjacent to the hawk watch parking area.

These nets also have billowy shelves (pouches) as part of the design to cradle the ensnared birds. Once netted, Dave gently untangles the owl and places it in a small cloth bag, which helps it remain calm for processing. Dave and his assistants then go about recording the date, location and specimen's physical characteristics. Additionally, the underside of the wings will glow in shades of pink when illuminated with an ultraviolet light, determining the owl's age. As the final task, Dave



Photo by Jeanine Ging

A Saw-whet Owl gets a band on its leg.

places a coded metal band on the owl's leg, ensuring that the recorded information is available to anyone who recaptures the bird in the future.

Dave and his team are not biased against other owls. On the rare occasion that a larger owl is netted, Dave is fully equipped to process it in the same manner, although the heavy leather gauntlets will be adorned when the talons of the larger birds become threatening to the handlers. For the research team and visitors, excitement abounds when a Saw-whet owl is captured. Excitement turns to a frenzied affair when something other than a Saw-whet is captured. And while the capture of a flying squirrel can make a tangled mess of the net, it helps to reanimate the crew on the often-frigid nights.

Since Dave started netting owls at the hawk watch in the 1990s, he has captured and banded over 1400 Norther Saw-whet owls. As expected, there is regular wear and tear on equipment, especially the nets, which are subject to the sharp talons and beaks of the birds along with the routine handling associated with erection and the incessant untangling of leaves and branches that blow into them.

So, at this time, the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society is petitioning the generosity of its members and supporters to help fund the purchase of new nets so Dave, Jeanine and their support crew can continue the seasonal tradition of netting and banding owls at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch. With about 15 nets in place each night, the total cost for replacement of the 20 plus year old nets is over \$2,100. Any donations made toward the purchase of nets and banding equipment will be used by APAS for that specific purpose. Please consider supporting this worthy endeavor that will allow APAS's nighttime volunteers to continue the owl banding program with the next generation of volunteers.

As with all APAS activities, visitors are welcome and encouraged to participate. Beginning near the middle of October, nets are erected at dusk, with owling continuing nearly until dawn with accommodating weather (minimal wind, no rain). An added perk are the spectacular night skies, often accompanied by Wayne Sierer's astronomical commentary.

Seasonally, banding will continue through mid-November, but check the website or social media to be sure. Parking is along the entrance lane or Lambert Mt. Road as the nets occupy the hawk watch parking area. Wear your warmest of clothes, bring a blanket, or maybe a sleeping bag to wrap yourself in. A headlamp or small flashlight and lawn chair are necessities and snacks always make a cold night more comfortable.

Again, please consider making a donation that will help APAS purchase new nets for the ongoing owl banding program at the Allegheny Front Hawk watch. Any amount will be appreciated. Just include a note or put "Owling" or "Owl Banding" on the subject line of your check to ensure it is dedicated to the acquisition of replacement nets and owl banding materials. Donations can be sent to:

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

## Benches Abound

By Adam Katrancha

Over the past two seasons park benches have been making their way to the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch. What started as one salvage project initiated by Adam Katrancha has evolved into a group effort by several members, resulting in four refurbished benches on which counters can recuperate between flights and visitors can relax as they scan the sky and enjoy the view. Adam's first bench was snatched from the literal trash heap. With oak boards procured from a colleague who dabbles in portable sawmill work, the bench was reassembled with new hardware, finished, and delivered to the Hawk Watch.

With an eye for repurposing, two additional benches were gleaned from impending disposal and reconstructed. Greg Gdula joined the fun and provided additional finishing and varnishing work resulting in the second oak bench and the blond sugar maple bench, which provides cozier seating due to its slightly shorter length.

Mike Smith then upped the ante and offered Greg a challenge by delivering a dilapidated eagle themed, curved back bench to the Hawk Watch. Like the others, this bench was also in disrepair and needed restoration for use.

Accepting the challenge, Greg's garage transitioned from vehicle storage to a temporary bench workshop. Over the winter and spring the oak boards were cut and planed; fit, sanded and finished to produce a bench worthy of display and appreciated by all at the Hawk Watch. As the final bit of flair,

Jim Rocco offered his steady hand for the etching and stenciling on each of the benches. With a little care and periodic maintenance, these benches will hopefully offer service for many years to come.



Photo by Tom Keuhl

Mike Smith and Greg Gdula show off one of the new benches.

*September 4, 2009*



Back: Nancy Flament, John Kahly, Jim Rocco  
Front: Jack Julian and Ed Gowarty

*September 17, 2022*



Back: Nancy Flament, John Kahly, Jim Rocco  
Front: Jack Julian and Ed Gowarty

## APAS Outing at Beaverdale Sportsmen's

By Adam Katrancha

Several Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society (APAS) members gathered at the Beaverdale Sportsmen's for a New Year's Eve outing (2022). While birds were sparse, the homemade Halupki, homegrown potatoes, baked apples, and assorted confectionaries made the day a success. Pictured left to right are APAS members Judy Johns, Ken Zakraysek, Ed Gowarty, Sr., and Bob Stewart. See the Events for details about the next planned outing on February 5, 2023. Photo by Adam Katrancha.



## Views



Photo by Tom Keuhl

Mike Smith and Georgia Shalek enjoy the view from the new bench.

## Outings, Meetings, and Events

As with all outings, presentations, walks, meetings, talks, etc., always check the APAS website, the Facebook site, or the Twitter account for updates or cancelations before leaving home. Our website is [www.alleghenyplateauaudubon.org](http://www.alleghenyplateauaudubon.org).

### Sunday, February 5, 2023 – Winter Outing at the Beaverdale Sportsmen's Association (BSA)

Winter Outing at the Beaverdale Sportsmen's Association – If conditions allow, this will be a snowshoe/cross country ski excursion. If there is insufficient snow, we will rendezvous at the cabin and explore the winter landscape on foot. The cabin and accompanying inside fireplace will provide shelter and warmth and, if conditions allow, we may also have an outdoor fire at the pavilion for cooking and warming. Plan to carry in your lunch and any other provisions you wish to share at your comfort level. Spring water is available and camp coffee can be brewed for those that wish to enjoy the nostalgia. Unfortunately, at this time, we must ask everyone to use their best judgement concerning the weather and their attendance. Also, due to the unforeseeable, ongoing Covid precautions may still be employed if warranted. Everyone is welcome. Even those that do not ski, snowshoe or hike are encouraged to visit, tend the fires and enjoy the camaraderie of their fellow outdoor enthusiasts. Attendees should access the area via Hollow Road in Ogletown off of Rt. 56. Old Bedford Pike (from Windber) does not receive winter maintenance so it may be impassable. If there is substantial snow, parking will be along Skyline Drive adjacent to the club's lane. Check the website for details before coming out. We will meet at the Sportsmen's property along Old Bedford Pike/Skyline Drive at 9:00 a.m. Bob Stewart will meet anyone not familiar with the Beaverdale Sportsmen's property at the Clear Shade Wild Area parking lot, just off Route 56 in the Gallitzin State Forest west of Ogletown. Bob will depart the Clear Shade lot at 8:30 a.m. Check the website for updates. (Address: Beaverdale Sportsmen's: 3264 Old Bedford Pike Extension)

**Late February - Spring Hawkwatching** – The hawkwatch will attempt to open in late February but is dependent on the conditions of the lane. Snow tends to build at the gate and the lane often has deep snow drifts. Check the website, Twitter, and our Facebook pages for updated conditions.

**Early March - Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area Swan/Snow Geese Outing** – The visitor center and interior roads open on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Weekends are very crowded and less desirable. This outing is weather dependent, so be sure to check the APAS website for details. Wayne Sierer will lead a walk/talk concerning Swans and Snow Geese at Middle Creek. If interested, please contact Wayne directly at [wcsierer@verizon.net](mailto:wcsierer@verizon.net).

**April 22, 2023 - Raptorthon** – Raptorthon is a joint venture between the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch and the Hawk Migration Association of North America. The purpose of Raptorthon is simple, to have fun birding while raising funds for raptor monitoring throughout the Americas.

**May 5-14, 2023 - Biggest Week in American Birding** – APAS members and AFHW frequenters will enjoy the most spectacular warbler migration at Maumee Bay in Ohio. If interested in meeting as a group, please contact Jeanine Ging at [neanpsu@hotmail.com](mailto:neanpsu@hotmail.com).