

# THE GNATCATCHER

Juniata Valley Audubon Society

September 1988



September's Program: Please join us for our September 27 meeting at the 28th Street Church of the Brethren on Union Avenue in Altoona. Our first program of the year will be Chuck Brightbill, who will discuss Pennsylvania raptors and their field identification. The program will be a fine introduction to the October 1 Hawk Mountain field trip (see elsewhere in this newsletter for details). As before, the meeting will begin at 7:30 with the business segment, followed by the program.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Wilson Kreitz

This was the year when all the Audubon chapters meet in their regional meetings. The meeting for our region was held at East Stroudsburg University from June 17-19, 1988. This meeting was particularly noteworthy in that it was a joint conference with chapters from the Northeast, as well as the Mid-Atlantic region.

The conference with its many meeting, both as a group and specialized sessions seemed to be a mix of good news and not-so-good news.

Under the heading of good news National Audubon finished the year in the **BLACK** for the first time in a while. But the bad news was, as we are all aware was that to do this meant the closing of several regional offices and dismissing of their staff.

Dr. Peter Myers presented an excellent program on Friday evening, but even it had its black side. He spoke on the serious negative effects the coming "greenhouse effect" will have on shore birds, plants and the human population, it was not a pretty picture. He did end on a somewhat optimistic note by telling us that if we work together to reduce, or eliminate, emissions from cars, powerplants, and if we stop cutting forests, both tropical and temperate at our current rates, and begin replanting them there is a chance that we can prevent any further degradation of our local, and global, environment.

We were also introduced to the 5 subjects that Audubon is considering their High Priority Issues, they are; The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Clean Air, Old Growth Forests, Platte River Dam Projects and Wetlands Preservation. I'm sure we'll be hearing more on these subjects in the next couple years, so please remember them when the call for action on these items is issued by National.

I would like to thank those members that represented Juniata Valley and contributed their time, and money, in attending this conference, they were; Paula Ford, Randy Harris and Teddie Kreitz.

The next regional meeting will be in 1990 and I'd like to recommend that anyone who has never attended one of these gatherings to begin making plans now. They are a source of information and ideas that we can always use, and are especially useful to new officers and committee chairpersons.

I hope everyone had a good summer and relaxed, because now we begin again.

## DEPARTED

We are saddened to hear of the death of Eugene Root on September 10. Eugene Root was an active Audubon member, bluebirder and a special friend to those who knew him. At his request, anyone who would wish to buy flowers should instead donate to the Juniata Valley Audubon Chapter, Box 2378, Altoona, PA 16603.

1 October 1988: HAWK MOUNTAIN: RAPTOR MIGRATION AT IT'S BEST

Bright and early on Saturday morning one large van (possibly two) will be leaving from Pleasant Valley Shopping Center at 6 A.M. with Hawk Mountain as its destination. Arriving at 10 A.M. we will plod along a well-maintained footpath to several overlooks where we will (hopefully) see thousands of migrating raptors heading south on their annual journey. Bring along lunch and drink as well as a soft pillow or pad to sit on. Also helpful are field guides and binoculars!!!! We will depart Hawk Mountain at 4 P.M., stop in Harrisburg for supper at 6 P.M. and be back in Altoona by 10 P.M.

Cost: \$15.00/person payable in advance. Checks payable to Juniata Valley Audubon and mailed to David Kyler, R.D. #4, Box 159A, Huntingdon, PA 16652 A. S. A. P. (as soon as possible) or see me at the September meeting. Reservations refundable if we have a stand-by list or we have a rain-out.

19 October 1988: WASHINGTON D.C. : THE SMITHSONIAN

In a spirit of friendship, we at Juniata Valley Audubon are sponsoring a field trip to our nation's capitol in conjunction with our "sister" conservation organizations in our area. This group made up of Auduboners from Juniata Valley and Allegheny Plateau, Moshannon Chapter of Sierra Club and Towpathers of Juniata County will travel via a Blue & White Charter Bus to Washington to enjoy the Smithsonian Institution as well as each others company.

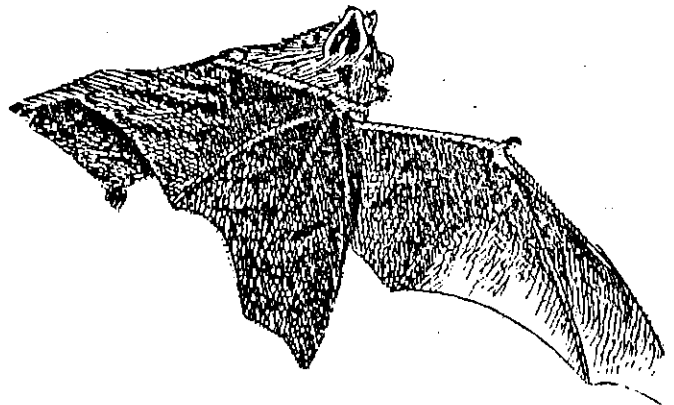
We will depart from the Pleasant Valley Shopping Center at 6 A.M. with pick up points at AMES Plaza on Huntingdon at 6:45 A.M. and at AMES Plaza in Burnam at 7:40 A.M. Please bring a brown bag lunch and drink for the four hour trip. At the Smithsonian are many displays and presentations, including OUR DISAPPEARING TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS. From 2 P.M. to 5 P.M. we are free to explore the MALL. We will depart D.C. for home at 5 P.M. with a stop enroute for supper arriving in Altoona at 11 P.M. (?)

Cost: \$20.00/person payable in advance. Checks payable to Juniata Valley Audubon and mailed to David Kyler, R.D. #4, Box 159A, Huntingdon, PA 16652. Reservations refundable if we have a replacement available from a stand-by list. Note! We only have 46 seats available for this trip! Make your reservations early!! Additional information call (814) 643-6030 after 5 P.M.

**CANOE CREEK UPDATE**

Terry Wentz

**EEK! Bats!** Indiana bats bring national awareness to Canoe Creek this summer as the subject of a national PBS radio broadcast. The PA Game Commission received a \$10,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reconstruct the entrances to the "bat" mine during the July 4th weekend. A representative from PBS taped the program with John Dunn, Game Biologist, during this work weekend. John Powers, a Virginia engineering technician instructor and expert mine gate designer, was on site to guide the construction project.



A final word on bats, Cal Butchcowski--BATMAN, actually Game Commission Wildlife Technician, recently surveyed a little brown bat nursery adjacent to the park. He declared it as the "largest bat nursery he has observed statewide" with a single colony of more than 1,000 bats.

Bats are not the sole association with Canoe Creek for research. This summer the bluebird monitor program continued for the sixth season; a small mammal survey was conducted by PHEAA students; and a local botanist has identified a rare prairie grass and a few trees and wildflowers uncommon to the area. All these species will be noted in the park management plan for special protection.

For Audubon birders, a few unusual birds were observed in the park this summer. Most noteworthy is a black tern which made an appearance for a two-day period in July. A sora rail was observed feeding near the Marsh Trail bridge and recently a pair of Goshawks were hunting in the fields around the park office.

Fishermen take note that a 14 pound, 33 inch Walleye was caught September 3rd, a Canoe Lake record, and a dead 38 inch Muskie was found floating recently. A three foot to five foot drawdown has been requested as soon as approved in order to complete the boat rental wall, a project delayed since 1986. The reduced lake pool will still be available for boating and fishing throughout the Fall with little affect on these activities.

Anyone driving to the park this Fall should be aware that during the months of September and October, a detour will reroute traffic along Route 22 east to the village of Canoe Creek. A bridge is being replaced on Turkey Valley Road approximately 1/2 mile east of the main entrance which will preclude access from Geeseytown or Scotch Valley. Please plan for this temporary inconvenience.

Parks are for people, enjoy them year round.

### **TOLL-FREE NUMBER FOR REPORTING POLLUTION**

If you see, or know of, a pollution incident there is now a toll-free number to call for reporting it. The number has been established by the Department of Environmental Resources, as a result of a concept proposed by Rep. Curt Bowley. The phone number for reporting pollution incidents is **1-800-541-2050**. This number should only be used to report emergency incidents, routine incidents should still be reported to the local office of DER.

### **WETLANDS WORKSHOP**

Do you want to learn the difference between wetlands and a "useless swamp?" Then plan to attend the wetlands workshop scheduled for September 24, 1988. This program is being conducted by Mr. Frank Plewa, Environmental Ecologist, with the Baltimore District of the Army Corp of Engineers and sponsored by the Blair County Conservation Officers organization.

The program, which will begin at 1:00 P.M., at the Brush Mountain Sportsmen's Club which is located behind the Pepsi Cola Bottling Plant near Bellemead, and last until about 5:00 P.M., will be in 2 parts; the first part will be a description of what are wetlands and the Corps responsibility in protecting these important pieces of our environment; the balance of the afternoon you will get to know a wetland on a one-to-one relationship. This means you will be "romping in the swamp", so you should consider that when you attend.

For more information contact Bob Beck at 944-7688.

### **NATUREFEST 1988**

For the seventh year Juniata Valley Audubon will be co-sponsoring the NATUREFEST at Fort Roberdeau, on October 2, 1988.

This is our opportunity to share our appreciation of the natural world and our enthusiasm in preserving that beauty.

As usual this event can only be a success with your help, so please plan to help with this event.

Any questions, comments, or suggestions should be directed to Peggy Goodman, Director, either at the fort 946-0048 or at home 942-5763.

### **WILD BIRD SEED SALE**

Enclosed with this issue (for those in our local area) is an order form for the annual wild bird seed sale. Extensive market research indicated that sales would be greater if the order forms were made

available sooner, so the form arrives with this issue. Please order by September 30 for pickup on October 15

### **PENNARC FUND-RAISING RAFFLE**

Enclosed in some newsletters (local area) are raffle tickets and an explanatory letter from the Pennsylvania for Acid Rain Control (PennARC) group. JVAS, along with many other state organizations, is affiliated with this important conservation group.

Unfortunately, the late date of the newsletter mailing does not leave much time before the raffle drawing date. (September 24, not the date printed on the ticket). PLEASE CONSIDER SENDING A CONTRIBUTION SOON. Even a contribution after the drawing would help.

### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Please submit items for the October issue before Wednesday, October 12 to Jim Winsor, 102 Halleck Place, Altoona, PA 16602 (943-8213) or Altoona Campus, Ivyside Park, Altoona, PA 16603 (949-5180).

PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS

Have you ever wondered how many different kinds of birds visited Pennsylvania during the year?? Ever wonder where they go in the winter?? How about those winter visitors at your backyard feeding station; where are they in the summer??

Frank and Barb Haas of Media Pa., would like to help you find out. Frank and Barb are the co-authors of the only quarterly journal of ornithology in the state: PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS.

At the present time their publication "outgo" far exceeds their publication "inflow" and they need new subscribers. For a yearly subscription cost of only ten dollars you can help put this "fledgling" periodical in the black. Please help to support them in this endeavor. [Back issues (1987-1988) will be at the September meeting for your inspection]

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PENNSYLVANIA BIRDS  
769 E. Forge Road  
Media, Pa. 19063-4332

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

New Subscription: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

Address Change: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Year : \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$10.00) \*

Volume 1 (1987- four issues) \$12.00

\* One year's subscription includes four issues covering January-December. The first issue is mailed in June and the last issue in March of the following year. Make checks payable to Pennsylvania Birds.