
The Gnatcatcher

Juniata Valley Audubon Society

Volume 16, Number 9

September 1984

New Gnatcatcher

by Paula Ford

Because we are changing from mimeographing to photocopying The Gnatcatcher, the Executive Board approved a change to 8½ by 11 inch size and gave me permission to experiment with the format.

I welcome (beg for!) your ideas, comments, any kind of input. Especially welcome are listings for a monthly column, "Great Birds." If you see an unusual bird (or a usual bird doing something unusual), please drop a postcard to Paula Ford, 518 West Second Street, Williamsburg, PA 16693. Or call 832-2462.

I'd also like to include recommendations from members for good places to bird, hike, picnic, etc. For example, have you been to an interesting nature center this summer? Why not write a little paragraph about it? Share your finds, both near and far. I've seen this sort of thing in other newsletters, and it seems nice.

Letters to the editor are also welcome. What are your thoughts about local, county, state, and national environmental issues? Have you written to your congressman lately? How did he reply?

Please contribute to The Gnatcatcher. Don't worry about typing, spelling, grammar, or anything else. That's what editors are for. Just share your ideas. Please.

September Meeting

The September meeting will be held at the Slep Building of Penn State's Altoona Campus at 7:30 on Tuesday, September 25.

The speaker for the meeting, which is co-sponsored by the University Scholars Program, will be Tom Serfass, Project Coordinator of the River Otter Reintroduction Program.

September Field Trip

Meet at 9 am at Pleasant Valley Shopping Center or at 9:30 at Water Street on Sept. 15 for a field trip to Shaver's Creek. Morning--bird of prey rehab program. Afternoon--hikes. Cost \$1

Executive Meeting

At its June meeting, the Executive Board decided to meet bimonthly this year at the Altoona Area Public Library.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 13, at 7:00 pm. As always, all members are welcome.

Meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the following months: September, November, January, March, and May.

New Memorial Book Policy

Also at its June meeting, the Executive Board voted to donate one memorial book per year in memory of that year's deceased members. Each year a different library will receive the book. The rotation will be alphabetical.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

by Marcia Bonta

Audubon's Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, entitled "Wildlife: Progress and Promise," was held at Eastern College, St. Davids, PA, from June 28-July 1. JVAS was represented by Mike and Laura Jackson and Marcia Bonta, all of whom arrived in time for the Chapter Delegate Session, followed by a very nice reception at Audubon's first home in America, Mill Grove.

Some of the highlights of the conference were speakers who told us about bald eagles on the Chesapeake Bay, as well as about the problems with pollution there, a panel on State Nongame Wildlife Programs, which gave us an idea of how our neighboring states of NJ, MD, DE, and VA administer programs similar to our own, and a keynote address called "Audubon in the Future" delivered by Russ Peterson, who called the nuclear and overpopulation threats our greatest challenges. He also emphasized Audubon's efforts in education--both on TV and in the schools.

Alexander Sprunt, IV, Director of Audubon's Research Dept., presented an excellent slide show & talk on Audubon sanctuaries throughout the country. They are preserving (and in some cases like the puffin's bringing back) species. Amos Eno, Legislative Director, also gave a rousing speech on the status of the National Wildlife Refuges. He told about the recent breaking up of a ring of falconers in the West who have been trapping and shipping wild birds of prey to Germany.

The many workshops tempted all three JVAS representatives, and Laura succumbed to one on "Backyard Wildlife Habitat Improvements." Mike was enthusiastic about "Bluebird Trails" and "Nest Boxes." Marcia conscientiously attended "Gypsy Moth Control--Avian Aspects."

After a very nice banquet on Saturday evening, Dr. Larry Rymon, Director of Pennsylvania's Osprey

Reintroduction Project, presented an informative talk about how it is doing. Because of a bad storm in the Chesapeake Bay, where we get our young ospreys, he could not get many young this year. However, at least two of the birds raised in Pennsylvania in past years have been spotted this summer, so hopes are high that the effort will finally pay off in a nesting site for ospreys in Pennsylvania again.

We were treated to the premier showing of The World of Audubon TV program for adults and a portion of Owl, a program for children. We three shared a little of what we at JVAS have been doing--Marcia narrated a short slide show of Mike and Laura's photos of our Presque Isle field trip.

Thanks to JVAS for helping to send us all to an interesting, informative conference.

[Editor's note: Thanks to Mike, Laura, and Marcia for attending the conference. And thanks, Marcia, for writing the article.]

World of Audubon

(MARO)

The national Audubon Society now has its own television show. [See above.] With the full cooperation of Ted Turner, owner of WTBS Television (Super Channel 17 from Atlanta), The World of Audubon will begin this fall on WTBS. There will be five different shows this first year, each broadcast three times on this national cable channel and network. The premier showing of the first program was shown at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference earlier this summer.

Mark your calendar now. The first program will be shown at 8:05 pm on October 22, at 5:35 pm on October 28, and at 4:05 on November 3.

[Editor's note: I saw the first program in Washington this summer, and it was great--better than 60 Minutes. If your cable has WTBS, don't miss this show.]

John Orr Wins Dutcher Award

Here is a copy of the Dutcher Award presented to John Orr for his work as a charter member of JVAS, his service as the chapter's first president, Gnatcatcher editor for many years, PAC worker and representative, 1983 president, and for his work on the Mill Run petition.

The National Audubon Society
William Dutcher Award
for outstanding service
to the Audubon cause
at the regional level
is presented to
John Hunter Orr
this day April 10, 1984

William Dutcher was the first chairman of the National Association of Audubon Societies when it was formed in 1905. Just as this early conservation organization was the precursor to the National Audubon Society, Dutcher was the prototype for today's Audubon activist. Dutcher lived from 1846 to 1920. For three decades he led the way in this nation's first efforts to protect wild birds. He set an example that Audubon members still strive to match.

He was one of the first to promote the idea of bird sanctuaries and helped to convince President Teddy Roosevelt to set aside Pelican Island, the first federal wildlife refuge. He fought in both the state and federal capitals to pass the earliest wildlife laws and then hired game wardens to enforce them. He promoted conservation at a time when it was a radical idea.

Dutcher oversaw Audubon's growth from a loosely-knit federation to a powerful organization. Recognizing the need for local involvement, he formed the first local chapters. He asked for no other reward than the satisfaction of knowing that his efforts might help our avifauna survive so that future generations could enjoy them.

JVAS congratulates John Orr for receiving this much-deserved award.

Washington Week by Paula Ford

The week I spent in Washington in June was one of the most exciting weeks of my life. When you lobby from afar, you tend to feel like you're always reacting to decisions that were made days or weeks in advance of your input. Sometimes you feel discouraged before you begin. I felt that way more often than not.

My trip to Washington changed that. I saw first hand how important grassroots activism can be. For example, on the day that we were scheduled to lobby against the Garrison Diversion project, a major compromise was announced: a task force would be named to study alternatives to the costly, environmentally disastrous project. We met with Senator Mark Andrews, the senator from North Dakota who has led the battle for the Garrison project. The discussion focused on the compromise, and Sen. Andrews praised Audubon's willingness to keep the lines of communication open. Also, because Audubon staff were involved in the negotiations, we were able to answer questions and fill in details for other members of Congress who we visited.

One of our major efforts on the House side was to lobby for the Oberstar version of the Omnibus Water Bill. We were given copies of a note from David Stockman to Congressman Petri in which he explained the Reagan administration's support for the amendment--on fiscal grounds. I discussed this with several Congressmen, including Congressman Shuster. All of the Congressmen I spoke with were very interested in the note, and Mr. Shuster agreed to support at least one of the key amendments. Incidentally, Mr. Shuster was very cordial and said he appreciated Audubon's commitment to discussing the issues with an open mind.

Ask me at the meeting, and I'll tell you lots more. In fact, you'll want to muzzle me.

efest

September 22 and 23, the annual Naturefest will be held at Fort Boberdeau's Nature Center. Saturday's program will be a continuing education course offered by Penn State. Sunday's program will be a family nature festival.

If you can help on Sunday, please call Peggy Goodman (942-5763). Thanks.

Speaking of Peggy

Peggy Goodman saved the day by agreeing to serve as this year's Conservation Committee Chairperson. Thanks, Peggy.

Seed Sale

This year's seed sale will be Nov. 10. Details later. In the meantime, please don't encourage birds who should migrate to stay by feeding too soon in the fall.

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September Meeting Preview

If you'd like to have dinner with our speaker before the meeting, please call Marcia Bonta (684-3113) and she will make reservations for the dutch treat dinner at Gullifty's at 6:00 pm on the 25th. Marcia needs to have all reservations by the 18th.

Gnatcatcher Mailing List

It costs a lot to mail The Gnatcatcher, and now our copying expenses will be much higher, too. The Executive Board has voted, therefore, to update the mailing list next month. If you are a member of the National Audubon Society, you will automatically get The Gnatcatcher. Otherwise, your name will be deleted from the list. Non-members who would like to receive The Gnatcatcher should send \$3 for a one-year subscription to

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