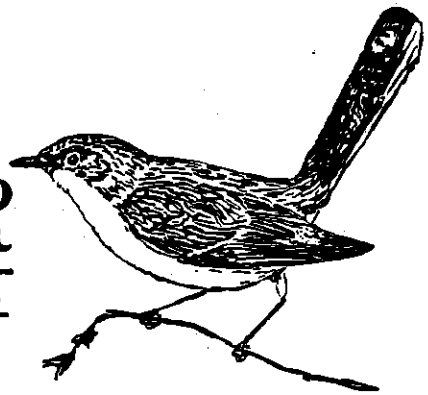


THE GNATCATCHER

Juniata Valley Audubon Society October 1985



Refuges on the Rocks:
Focus on Chincoteague
by Tom Troy

Tom Troy

Tom Troy is Regional Representative for the National Audubon Society in the Mid-Atlantic region. Tom is a new face in the regional office, but he is not new to Audubon or to the Mid-Atlantic states. Born and raised in Baltimore, Tom attended school in Virginia. He received his Master's at Virginia Tech in 1980.

While living on Maryland's Eastern Shore, Tom taught 7th grade life science, worked as a seasonal ranger for the Maryland Park Service, and spent many weekends at local wildlife refuges. Those years strengthened Tom's commitment to conservation and eventually launched him into a career with the National Audubon Society.

Before joining Audubon's regional staff, Tom was director of the Audubon Ark, a national traveling exhibit about America's endangered species. In three years, the Ark visited 143 cities in 45 states and worked with local Audubon chapters (including JVAS) to educate the public about endangered wildlife. Tom's responsibilities included media interviews and presentations for schools.

Tom enjoys backpacking, birding, and nature photography. His special areas of concern include endangered species, wetlands, and the Chesapeake Bay. Tom lives in Mechanicsburg, where he is happy to have a home after three years "on the road."

In July 1983 Audubon magazine ran a 32,000-word special report on the status of our National Wildlife Refuge System. Audubon writer, Jim Doherty, asked tough questions and found our refuges beset with problems. Increasing commercial and recreational pressures, budget cuts, and an administration that doesn't seem to care have made things even worse since then.

As a result National Audubon Society has launched an ambitious nationwide Adopt-A-Refuge Program. Audubon chapters are taking local wildlife refuges under their wings and helping out with everything from trail maintenance to setting policy.

October's program will discuss the Adopt-A-Refuge Program and will focus on Chincoteague, a popular wildlife refuge on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Chincoteague is one of the crown jewels of our National Wildlife Refuge System, a 410-unit system which encompasses nearly 90 million acres in 49 states. This system provides the last line of defense for some of America's most fascinating creatures.

Join us on October 29 at the 28th St. Church of the Brethren at 7:30 p.m. for Tom's slide show and discussion of threats to Chincoteague.

From the President's Desk
by Marcia Bonta

JV--Bruce and I would like to thank all of you who donated to Peru conservation at our first meeting. We have matched your offerings and will send a check for \$100 to help Coppelia Hay's work with Humboldt penguins and diving petrels. We were also pleased that 70 people attended our first meeting and hope as many will be at our October one.

PROGRAMS--Now that everyone has had a chance to admire our program and speakers' bureau brochure, I would like to thank our Vice President, John Lennox, who put them together. If you ever wonder what we do in the summer, you should wonder no longer. After a preliminary meeting at my home with volunteers Paula Ford, Dave Kyler, and Bob Keppler, all of whom gave valuable suggestions about both the programs and the field trips, John contacted prospective speakers, chose the best he could find, and then designed the programs. Paula, John, Dave, and Bob have also shared the field trip duties and several of the programs. I am grateful to all of them for helping to plan what looks like the best year yet for JVAS.

CONSERVATION--Speaking of Paula, she is wearing two hats this year. In addition to editing The Gnatcatcher, she volunteered to head the Conservation Committee. However, she does need members on her committee. Please contact her if you'd like to help (695-4799).

OSPREY UPDATE--Both Paula and I attended Pennsylvania Audubon Council meetings on September 20, but she went to Johnstown, and I traveled to Reading. I was lucky enough to hear (and see) Larry Rymon's updated slide show/talk on the Pennsylvania osprey program. So far, 105 ospreys have been hatched successfully over the five-year period. While several three-year-old Pennsylvania-hatched ospreys returned this year, there

were still no matings. One male tried valiantly to attract passing females, and a female actually stayed in the vicinity for a week, but despite his ardent courting, she continued on her travels. He remained, off and on, well into July, until one day eight recently hatched youngsters landed on the nesting platform he had been occupying. At first he tried to court them, but when they didn't respond, he suddenly began to feed them. He was one busy foster parent for the rest of the season as he kept eight stepchildren stuffed with fish. Such a performance has never been recorded by ornithologists before, so although our ospreys have yet to start families, one osprey, at least, has distinguished himself as "Outstanding Stepfather of the Year."

PHOTOGRAPHERS--Walt Pomeroy and Tom Troy want good quality duplicate slides of some of our chapter activities for use in a slide program about Mid-Atlantic chapters. They hope to include pictures of field trips, banquets, bird seed sales, educational activities, and monthly programs. So choose your best slides and give them to me as soon as possible (before December 1).

BIRDWATCHER-WRITERS--Cassinia, the bird journal of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, has expanded its range to include all of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Authors may submit articles (before Jan. 15, 1986) to Edward D. Fingerhood, Editor Cassinia, 4604 Debilen Circle #F, Pikesville, MD 21208.

ENDANGERED WILDFLOWERS--The American Horticultural Society is offering a calendar featuring endangered wildflowers. We ordered one last year and found it to be beautiful and informative. Send \$6.95 to AHS, Box 0105, Mount Vernon, VA 22121. Proceeds are used to educate the public about our endangered wildflowers. This year AHS presented five awards to people across the country who discovered endangered wildflowers thought to be extinct!

Bottle Bill Update
by Paula Ford

Conservation Committee members Wilson and Teddie Kreitz and I traveled to Harrisburg on October 16 for the Bottle Bill Lobby Day.

Rep. Edwin Johnson of Hollidaysburg was one of the key speakers at the press conference that kicked off the lobbying effort which will certainly last more than one day! Rep. Johnson is a cosponsor of the bill, and Wilson, Teddie, and I thanked him on behalf of JVAS. In a recent letter to Tom Troy, Rep. Johnson said, "I am using all my influence to see that this Bill comes to fruition." We should all let him know how much we appreciate his efforts.

The Kreitzes and I also met with Minority Whip Samuel Hayes, Jr., who represents the Tyrone area. The coordinators of the lobbying effort had listed Rep. Hayes as undecided, but he showed us an article from the March 1984 issue of Pennsylvania Farmer in which he declared his support for H.B. 479. Rep. Hayes told us, "Nothing has changed since 1984. I'm with you all the way." He also deserves a hearty thank you from the chapter, and especially from those of you who live in his district.

We also met with Rep. Richard Geist of Altoona. Unfortunately, he does not support the present version of H.B. 479. Rep. Geist says he can't support the bill unless it's "comprehensive," so he plans to introduce a series of amendments that would require deposits on all containers, including milk bottles, soup cans, frozen juice cans, bleach and detergent bottles, wine and other liquor bottles, etc. He said, "Why settle for a slice when you could have the whole loaf?" His idea may look good, but his amendments would certainly make the bill harder (if not impossible) to pass.

What you can do

1. If you live in Altoona, Rep. Richard Geist is your representative. Please write to him immediately and ask him not to complicate matters by introducing frivolous amendments. (When was the last time you saw a bleach bottle along the road?) Ask him to support H.B. 479, the Reusable Container Act. Address your letters to
The Honorable Richard Geist
House Post Office
Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

2. If you live in the Hollidaysburg area, please write to Rep. Edwin Johnson and thank him for cosponsoring H.B. 479, the Reusable Container Act. (same address)

3. If you live in the Tyrone area, write to Rep. Samuel Hayes, Jr. Thank him for his support of H.B. 479. Point out why the bill is important to you. (same address)

4. Send a copy of your letter to House Leader James Manderino at the above address, and ask him to bring H.B. 479 before the House for a vote.

3. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper in support of H.B. 479. In your own words, explain why the bill is important to you. If you've noticed a difference in states with bottle bills where you've travelled, that might be a useful comment to include.

PLEASE write today. Rep. Johnson and Rep. Hayes have stood up to the pressure of well-organized and well-financed industry lobbyists. They deserve to know that we appreciate and support their efforts. Rep. Geist deserves to know that we think he's on the wrong track.

By the way, environmental activism has its benefits: I saw a saw-whet owl on my way to Harrisburg; it was my second ever.

Barn Owls?

Barn owl presently is listed as a species of special concern in Pennsylvania, and the population appears to be on declining.

Through an expected grant from the Pa. Game Commission and the cooperation of the Valley Forge and South Mountain Audubon Societies a project is being undertaken to inventory this species and to reestablish the population over its former range.

How you can help

If you know of sites where barn owls now nest or have nested in the past, please contact

Alan Gehret
107 Level Rd.
Collegeville, PA 19426

phone: (215) 498-1871

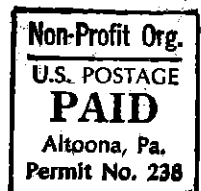
Book Fair

At October's meeting, Aboud's Bookstore of the Station Mall, Altoona, will set up a book fair. Mr. and Mrs. Aboud will have available for sale a selection of nature and science books for all ages and science kits for children at a 10% discount. They'll also have a selection of books from Smithsonian Press--books that are difficult to find locally. You may also order books at the meeting, pick them up at Aboud's Bookstore at a later date, and receive the same discount. It's not too early to think about your Christmas list! We thank the Abouds for providing this service.

Field Trip News

October's field trip to Waggoner's Gap was an outstanding success: a peregrine falcon, an immature bald eagle, and 150 sharpshins. The next field trip is our fossil walk for kids (& grownups) on Nov. 9. Meet at the PVSC at 9 a.m. Bring a bag lunch. Call John Lennox (946-1584).

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
P. O. Box 2378
Altoona, PA 16603



**DATED
MATERIAL**

H.B. 479 BEVERAGE CONTAINER DEPOSIT

"THE BOTTLE BILL"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Deposit legislation is supposed to reduce litter. Aren't Beverage Containers only a small part of the litter stream? Isn't this Bill going to be a lot of trouble to take care of only 10% of the litter?

A. Beverage Containers represent 40 - 60% of roadside litter by volume. Opponents say only 10% of litter are beverage containers. They reach this conclusion by counting litter piece-by-piece. In other words, a bottle and cigarette butt each equal one piece of litter. A can and a paper tissue each count as one. Beverage Containers are the most dangerous part of the litter stream and generally are not biodegradable--they last a long time. Removing Beverage Containers gets rid of half of all litter (by volume).

Q. Current litter laws don't work. You can't legislate people's behavior. Litterbugs are going to litter anyway.

A. The beauty of Deposit Laws is that it creates an economic incentive to not litter. Few people are in the habit of throwing a nickle out the window. Those few who do are providing a nickle to pedestrians, bicyclists, farmers, and others who will see the containers, pick them up, and redeem the deposit. States that have deposit laws find dramatic reductions in litter, which immediately saves taxpayer dollars in reduced need to clean up the roadsides.

Q. Does litter affect any industries in Pennsylvania?

A. Litter has a negative impact on the #1 and #2 Industries in Pennsylvania, namely Agriculture and Tourism. Damage to machinery and death and injury to livestock has been pegged at \$37,500,000 annually by the Pennsylvania Farmers Association. Losing a prize milk cow or a horse, having a tractor out of commission during harvest can be a substantial economic loss to already financially-pressed farmers.

Q. Won't this law drive the price of beer and soda way up, hurting the consumer and the retailer?

A. There are two parts to the bill dealing with fees. First, the 5¢ deposit on all containers, which the consumer gets back when the container is redeemed (not a price increase). The bill also allows retailers to be paid a 2¢ handling fee per container. This is to cover additional costs to the retailer for handling and temporary storage. It is proper to have the consumer pay this slight increase to be sure that containers are disposed of properly or recycled. Only if retailers engage in price-fixing and/or price-gouging will consumers see significant price increases.

Q. What effects will the deposit bill have on solid waste problems in Pennsylvania?

A. Right now, most beverage containers end up on the roadside or in a landfill. Pennsylvania is running out of land fill space in many areas. The Penna. Bureau of Solid Waste estimates that a deposit bill can save \$22.8 Million annually in solid waste disposal costs and another \$7 Million annually from reduced need to construct and operate landfills.

The deposit bill would extend the life of landfills. Additionally, if we have incineration (waste-to-energy) plants, this bill would remove items that have a negative BTU value (they don't burn, they draw off heat and end up in the redidue that must be disposed of). A deposit bill complements waste-to-energy plants.