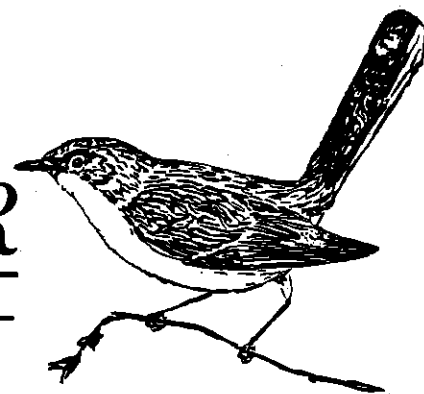


THE GNATCATCHER

Juniata Valley Audubon Society February 1986



The Chesapeake
by Paula Ford

February 25 at 7:30 p.m.
28th Street Church of the Brethren

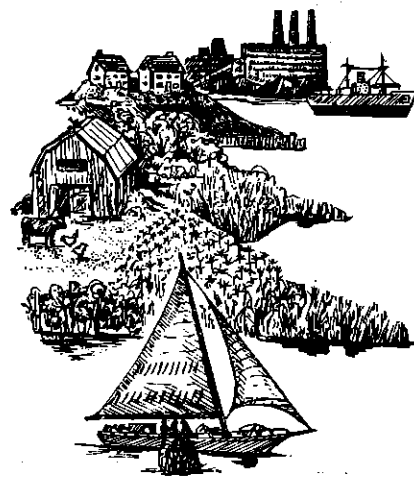
Our next regular meeting will be devoted to the Chesapeake Bay. We'll see a slideshow, "Chesapeake Bay: Barren or Bountiful?" that will explain the geologic origins of the Chesapeake, the way the Bay works, why it's so valuable, how it's threatened by pollution, and what can be done to preserve it.

We'll also see a movie, "Chesapeake: The Twilight Estuary." The movie, produced by the University of Maryland Sea Grant Program, documents the search for cause of the decline of seagrasses in the Bay. It deals specifically with the problems of sediment in the Bay and with the role of science in resolving difficult resource management issues.

Both the slideshow and the movie should be fascinating, especially when you consider that we in Central Pennsylvania are part of the Bay's problem. We live in the Susquehanna River drainage basin, and half of fresh water in the Chesapeake comes from the Susquehanna River. So we are part of the problem, but we also can be part of the solution.

I'm putting together an informative display of brochures, newsletters, pamphlets, and books about the Chesapeake. These will be on display at the meeting. You might want to plan a vacation to the Chesapeake this year (it has beauty, history, fishing, birding--something for everyone), or you may want to learn how recycling oil in Altoona can help save the Bay.

The Chesapeake has something for everyone, and I've tried to put together a program that will give JVAS members and friends a taste of what the Chesapeake has to offer. Please try to attend this important meeting, and please bring a friend. You might just fall in love with the Chesapeake as I did when I attended last year's Chesapeake Bay conference at Millersville.



Conservation News
by Paula Ford

Although the conservation committee is a small one, it has been very busy this year. The bottle bill remains our top priority, but for now it seems as if all we can do is try to respond to some of the misinformation that opponents of the bill have been trying to spread around. The bill itself is still stuck in committee.

Conservation committee member Steve Parks has been staying on top of the local billboard situation. Some local advertisers and politicians would like to see billboards obscure the view of the Allegheny Front from the new Route 220 as it bypasses Altoona. We'll be doing our best to stop them; if you'd like to get involved in this issue, please contact either Steve or me.

Dr. Rob Loeb, a new JVAS member, recently helped me to write testimony on the state's draft plan for dealing with hazardous waste. I presented the testimony at a public hearing in State College on February 6, and the woman who represented DER told me afterwards that our testimony was very good because it was specific. Thanks Rob. And thanks also to the New York City Audubon Chapter--their loss is certainly our gain!

The Conservation Committee will meet soon to select the recipient of this year's JVAS Conservation Award. If you know of a nonmember who deserves recognition for conservation activities, please let me know. The recipient can be an individual or a group.

If you'd like to participate in the fascinating, important activities of the Conservation Committee, see me at the meeting or call me at 695-4799.

Field Trip

Bob's field trip will be to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Center. We'll meet at the Pleasant Valley Shopping Center at 6:00 a.m. or at the Huntingdon McDonalds at 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 22. Contact Bob Keppler or Dave Kyler (643-6030).

Disappearing Dinosaur?

In prehistoric times, condors soared over mastodons and saber-toothed tigers. But in the last century condors have been brought to the brink of extinction by man.

A magnificent giant that pulls itself aloft on a ten-foot wingspan, the California condor is a tough survivor. But as you read this, only five are left in the wild, and just twenty-one in captivity.

Scientists are working hard to save this threatened creature, but they're not certain they can. The condor has survived the millennia, but can it survive man?

The story of the California condor and the efforts to save it will be featured on "World of Audubon" on WTBS on March 1 at 10:05 p.m., March 12 at 10:05 p.m., March 16 at 6:05 p.m., and March 25 at 12:05 a.m.

Free Movies at Lemon House

JVAS member Glenn Mock reports that the free movies being shown on weekends at the Lemon House in Summit are terrific. He's obtained the following schedule from the National Park Service (films begin at 1:00 p.m.):

3/1-2 Canada

Western Canada: Land of Discovery, Valley of a Thousand Peaks, Island Eden, Come in From Away

3/8-9 Sports

Auto Racing, Ski Super Natural, Skycapers, Break on Through, Magic Rolling Board, Moods of Surfing

3/15-16 American Folklore

Washington Irving, Sleepy Hollow, Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, Ben and Me

3/22-23 Nature: Big and Small

African Elephant, The Great Apes, Secret in the Hive, Spring in Nature

From the President's Desk
by Marcia Bonta

FOOTBALL FANS--There is no doubt that the Penn State football team has unusual numbers of dedicated fans who will endure any kind of weather to watch a home game. Remember the Penn State-Notre Dame game when thousands of fans got head colds from sitting out in the cold rain? Well, Becky and John Peplinski of the State College Bird Club also found the game to be memorable--they scanned the skies above them rather than the field below and saw a northern fulmar circling Beaver Stadium! It's hard to believe that this pelagic bird from the North Atlantic made the long trip just to see the game, but it is the first reported sighting of the bird in Pennsylvania. So next time you attend a game, be sure to keep checking the sky. Who knows how many friends the northern fulmar might bring along next time?

THE EGRET EXPRESS--The National Audubon Society is definitely increasing its commitment to environmental education. Marshal Case is the new vice president for education, and his division has developed a new quarterly education newsletter called The Egret Express for chapter presidents and education chairpersons. The purpose of the newsletter is to foster regular communications between the NAS education division and the chapter network through which the Society's education goals are realized at the local level. "Egret" stands for Environmental Goals, Resources, and Educational Techniques. It is also a symbol the birds the NAS originally defended from the feather trade when the Society was founded 80 years ago.

DO SOMETHING WILD--Don't forget wildlife when you send in your Pennsylvania income tax. Check the box for the Pennsylvania Wild Resource Conservation Fund.

PETER A. A. BERLE--The new president of National Audubon is determined to establish better communication links with local chapters and NAS, so he is sending out "President to President" letters with the theme "Behind the Scenes at NAS." One of the topics he covered in his first letter was the disagreement between NAS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over the management of California condors. Because of the rapid decline of wild condors, the FWS wants to put the five remaining ones in captivity. On February 4 the FWS was prevented from doing so this by a preliminary injunction granted by the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., in response to an Audubon lawsuit. Audubon believes that the capture could endanger habitat and make the planned release of captive-reared condors next to impossible. The court found the FWS decision to be arbitrary, and not backed by the required scientific and impact analysis. In the meantime, NAS continues to press for acquisition of critical portions of unprotected condor foraging habitat and to work to develop criteria that will provide for the scheduled release of condors raised in captivity.

THANK YOU--To Craig Cameron and Paula Ford for their beautiful slide show on Pennsylvania's wildflowers at the January meeting. Despite the cold weather and the shuttle's blowing up that morning, over 40 members attended. John Lennox's display of his work with water pollution in Blair County springs was also appreciated, as was Melvin Lane's "What is it?" bird of prey exhibit.

MINI FIELD TRIP--Mark May 17 on your calendar for a mini field trip to the Tytoona Cave Natural Area to see the ephemeral spring wildflowers. This field trip is not in our program, but is an extra provided so friends and members can visit this unique local spot.