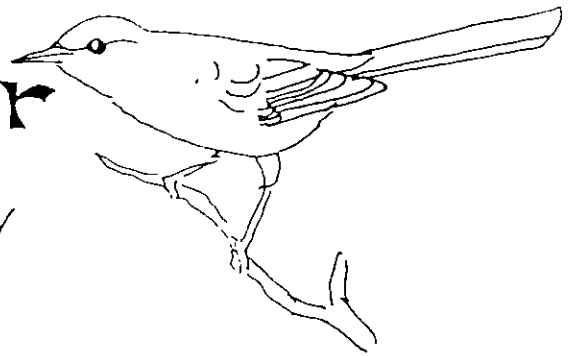


# The Gnatcatcher



JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1991

OCTOBER PROGRAM: 1. HISTORIC FORT ROBERDEAU - Peggy Goodman takes a look at Blair County history  
29 October 1991  
2. J.V.A.S. INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS - Mike Jackson will preview a slide show being used for International Issues

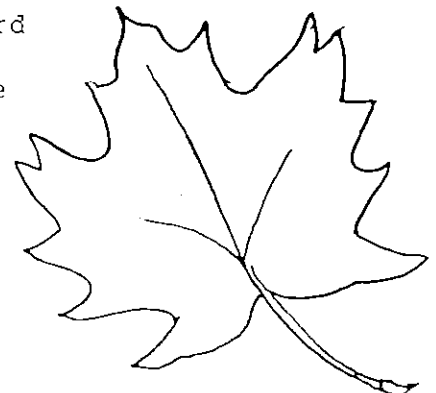
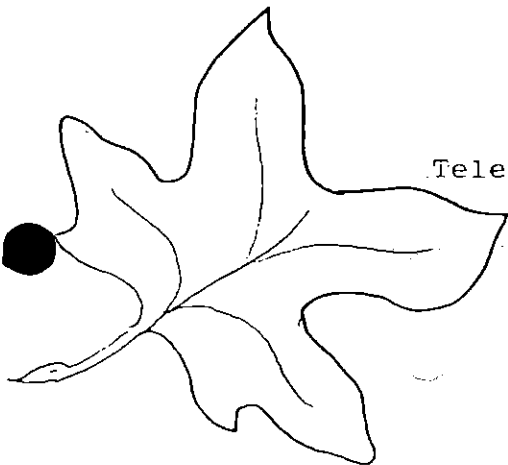
FIELD TRIP: FORT ROBERDEAU: Saturday, 2 November 1991  
Join chapter members, family, and friends for a close up look at the fort, nature center, and trails. You surely will be delighted with the progress we have made in the construction of the bird feeding/observation area, which will be dedicated at this time. Meet at the Fort Roberdeau parking area at 10 AM. Bring a lunch!

AUDUBON TELEVISION ENDANGERED: The National Audubon Society is under attack for putting before the public a television special that portrays a highly controversial subject; the grazing of private cattle on public land. The show, "The New Range Wars" about the devastation of our public lands in the West by over-grazing, has displeased the National Cattlemen's Association. Even though the show portrays the ranchers' perspective as well as that of environmentalists, the cattle lobby and the National Inholders Association lobby have launched an all-out campaign to try to persuade General Electric to drop its underwriting of Audubon television. They are seeking boycotts of General Electric products and deluging the company with mail.

It is urgent that General Electric hears from the other side, from the thousands of Americans who care enough about the Audubon cause to write or call GE in support of Audubon television. We ask you to send a letter or call GE and praise them for underwriting Audubon television specials and request that they continue to do so. Every television show we produce reaches 20 million Americans with a powerful environmental message. We need your help to continue these messages!

Here's where to write: Mr. Jack Welch  
Chairman of the Board  
General Electric  
3135 Easton Turnpike  
Fairfield, CT 06431

Telephone: (203) 373-2971



## LETTER FROM HONDURAS

Marcia Bonta

As many of you know, our youngest son, Mark, is now an environmental consultant in the Peace Corps. He sends us long letters (the last was 27 pages) and then tells us to copy and distribute them to Audubon people. The problem is, he writes in pencil and his "hand-writing" is not great. So, I thought I would give members just a few highlights from his last letter and urge any of you who are interested to write to him. He will answer.

"Start planning an Audubon of Pennsylvania trip to Honduras now!!! My site is Sierra de Agalta, the largest cloud forest in Honduras in the huge department of Olancho, on the border of Mosquitia. I will be living in Juticalpa, the capital of Olancho with 70,000 people. For Olancho think Texas and you know what it's all about. Huge cattle ranches and everybody packs guns. It's called the Wild East. I will be living in a house that has a kitchen with everything (well, not refrigerator), bathroom of running water, electricity, bed, chairs, a library of books of former PCVs, two bedrooms, lots of furniture, and, best of all, a backyard totally landscaped with shade trees and a flagstone pathway by former volunteers."

In August Mark, along with two other PCVs, a British botanist who specializes in orchids, and Honduras's most prominent scientist and environmentalist who is a herpetologist, accompanied by a mule, a horse, and a couple local guides, launched the first scientific expedition (six days) into Mark's site--Sierra de Agalta. "It is amazing that Sierra de Agalta has never been studied, but this may change now that a botanist and a herpetologist have ascended its summit, and cursorily glanced at its reptiles, amphibians, and orchids. Oh yes, there was a Peace Corps volunteer who occupied himself primarily with watching birds!" Mark found dippers and a cave in which white-collared swifts spent the night, both indicators of the untouched environment. They also encountered army ants, stinging wasps, the three-wattled bellbird, and "spider monkeys, five of them, 50 feet above our heads, unafraid, swinging back and forth on their absurdly long limbs, hanging by thin tails, scratching their underarms, and generally being very stereotypically monkey-like. After a time of National Geographic Special-style viewing, we left them to their own devices, elated to have discovered a monkey species not hitherto documented in the park."

As they reached the top of the peak, they got a clear view of a pale-billed woodpecker, "well above its supposed altitudinal range. At this time I began successfully calling in cloud forest birds such as common bush-tanagers and golden-browed warblers, and there were hummingbirds, plentiful, colorful, and curious. I was buzzed numerous times by green-breasted and green-throated mountain gems, garnet-throated hummingbirds, violet sabrewings and fork-tailed emeralds. Tom discovered two new orchids. One was like a white daffodil; another was a showy purple. Of course, there were many other orchids in bloom, but common ones, that he didn't give a second look at! I could imagine an orchid fancier in the United States falling into a dead faint in the montane forest of Honduras for the variety and showiness is indeed overwhelming.

Sierra de Agalta is a jewel in the crown of Honduras. The nuclear zone of this park is some 50,000 acres of virgin forest and the park as a whole includes some 120,000 acres." Mark hopes to help the Hondurans protect the park, yet find a way to benefit the people too. His address is AP#78, Juticalpa, Olancho, Honduras, Centro-America. Your airmail letter will take at least two weeks to reach him.

# AUDUBON COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA TO CREATE STATE OFFICE

by Leigh Altadonna

(condensed from The ACP Drummer)

The Audubon Council of Pennsylvania is on the threshold of fulfilling its goal of hiring an Audubon advocate and establishing a state office to insure that the environmental issues which our 26 Pennsylvania chapters and our 27,000 members in the Commonwealth have identified as priorities will be followed more effectively. The Pennsylvania Audubon Office is scheduled to be opened in January of 1992. Once established, the state office's success and effectiveness will rest upon the chapter network and the cooperative relationships developed between the chapters through ACP.

This is an important year for ACP. There is much to be gained. Since its formalization in 1987, ACP has helped to raise the level of involvement and impact of Audubon members on issues of concern in Pennsylvania. Once the Pennsylvania Audubon Office is established and operating, our collective Audubon voices will do much to help us achieve responsible stewardship of Penn's Woods as embodied in the Audubon Cause.

THE ACP FALL COUNCIL MEETING will take place at Canoe Creek State Park on October 18, 19, and 20. Many interesting topics will be presented. One of the highlights will be a hiking and birding field trip to the Lower (Rails to Trails) Trail starting at 2:30PM at the Williamsburg Trail Head. All are encouraged to attend. The complete agenda is listed below.

## FRIDAY

18 October

3:00-5:30PM

Birding/Hiking

6:00-7:00PM

"Dutch Treat"

Pizza Party at  
the nature center

7:30-8:30PM

Review of 1991

Audubon Convention

9:00-?

Nightwatch walk

## SATURDAY

19 October

7:00-8:30AM

Birdwalk

8:30 Breakfast

9:00-10:00

Registration

10:00 Welcome

10:15 Wetlands

11:00 NAS Update

11:30 Environmental Ed.

Legislative Initiative

12:00 Lunch

12:30 ACP Issues Task Force

12:45 Issues Focus Groups

1:45PM "Armchair Activist" Program

2:30 Field Trip (see note above)

5:30 Dinner at Lake Raystown Resort\*\*

7:00 George Lavanish Print at

Marina Restaurant (Raystown)

7:30 Beringia Project/ANWR

by Walt Pomeroy

## SUNDAY

20 October

7:00AM

Birdwalk

8:00 Breakfast

at nature center  
and cabins

9:00 ACP Business

Meetings

11:30AM

Adjournment



\*\* Reservations required

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dave Kyler

Walt Pomeroy, vice-president of the Mid-Atlantic Regional office was with us at our September meeting with a timely and interesting program on the perils in store for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in northern Alaska. When asked what our local members could do to help he answered: "WRITE TO YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES AND TELL THEM HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS ISSUE" !!!!! O.K. folks, here is how you can help to save this pristine and beautiful area from unnecessary oil exploration and all of the destruction and degradation that it brings.

WHERE: THE HONORABLE \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

THE HONORABLE \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. SENATE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

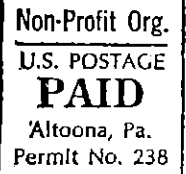
WHAT: Please support HOUSE BILL HR39 and SENATE BILL S39  
(which opposes opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to any and all oil exploration)

WHY: The oil companies have access to 95% of Alaska's Arctic coast already, for oil exploration, they do not need the remaining 150 miles of the ANWR to pillage!!

WHEN: NOW !!! (Folks, having lived in Alaska for two years I know first-hand how beautiful and wild our 49th State is; this Refuge is our national treasure, let's protect it !!)

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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DATED MATERIAL