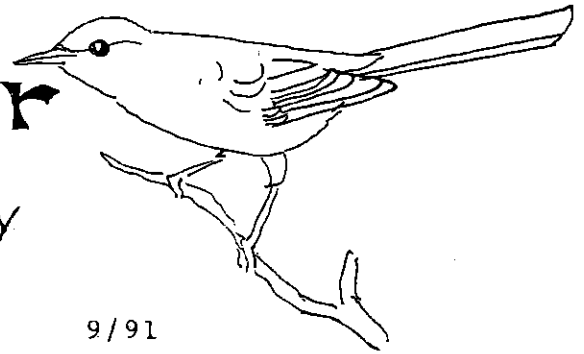


# The Gnatcatcher



## JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK - Dave Kyler

9/91

Welcome to a new and challenging Audubon year! It seems hard to believe that the summer has passed by so quickly and that autumn, and all that it promises, lies just ahead.

As you can see from the enclosed 1991-92 program, your local chapter, Juniata Valley, has an interesting, varied, and exciting schedule for you this year. We hope that you will be able to join us for all the programs/field trips and that you will encourage friends to come along.

A heartfelt thanks to all those unselfish members who kept the Audubon tradition alive over the summer months, from the many hours spent at the Fort Roberdeau observation/feeding/planting area, through the many sessions compiling the Program/Gnatcatcher and finally culminating in our chapter's excellent representation at the National Convention in Estes Park, Colorado this summer. These and many other chapter endeavors deserve congratulations and a "well done"!

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM: "Alaska: Audubon Conservation Challenges for the 1990's" 24 September 1991

We will travel to Alaska through a slide program presented by Walter Pomeroy, National Audubon Mid-Atlantic Regional Vice President. This is very timely because of two major Alaskan activities currently involving Audubon members across the country; the Beringia Project to identify and save critical wildlife habitat on both the U.S. and Russian sides of the Bering Sea, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the coastal plain of which is currently being threatened with oil development. Mr. Pomeroy will have the latest fact sheets available for you to use so you can write to your Congresspersons and Senators.

To keep abreast of this and other conservation issues, please become part of Audubon's Activist Network. It's free for Audubon members. Simply fill out the form below and send it to the address indicated.



I would like to join Audubon's Activist Network. I pledge to write at least two letters and make two phone calls on behalf of the environment.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Sign the pledge, fill in your address, and return to Arctic Campaign, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. If you are not a member of the National Audubon Society, enclose a check for \$20. You will receive all benefits of Audubon membership.

PLEASE NOTE THAT REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMS WILL FEATURE CHILD-CARE SERVICES BY AMY KING. THERE WILL BE GAMES AND ACTIVITIES ADJACENT TO THE MEETING HALL.

EDUCATION - Consider sponsoring Audubon Adventures in a fourth grade class. This is a great way to attract future Auduboners. Contact Colette Heller for details. The earth's future is in the hands of our children.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES: HELP A HONDURAN OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Marcia Bonta

Do you have backpacking equipment you no longer need? A group of Honduran environmentalists, in conjunction with a few of our son Mark's Peace Corps friends, is developing Honduras's first outdoor education program for Honduran environmentalists, teachers, student and youth groups, business leaders and politicians. On backpacking trips into the cloud forests and national parks they will be taught about low-impact camping techniques and ethics, basic tropical forest ecology and environmental problems. They wrote to ask for our assistance in obtaining the following equipment: backpacks, daypacks, tents and tent repair kits, sleeping bags, binoculars, powerful flashlights, backpack stoves and repair kits, fuel bottles, 10 inch cooking pots and frying pans, 3 gallon water bags, Birds of Mexico, Birds of Costa Rica, compasses, first-aid and snakebite kits, 8'x 12' tarpaulins, large stuffsacks, 1-2 liter water bottles and iodine/ water treatment sets, insect repellent, seam sealer, ASA 25-200 rolls of color print and slide film, and a sturdy video camera tripod. Bruce and I will be collecting this equipment over the next four months. If you have any donations, please bring them to our program meetings or call us at 684-3113. Honduras, incidentally, is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, but it has the most pristine intact rainforest north of the Amazon.

CONSERVATION: BAN OPEN BURNING - Craig Cameron

It has been a very dry summer but one good result has been a burning ban by several Blair County communities. Now would be an excellent time to ban open burning permanently. We all know what fires can do to property but sometimes forget the seriousness of what it does to the air we breathe. When burning occurs, most of the material disappears physically but is still present in other hazardous forms. This causes the most damage to the environment and us.

Before the county solid waste plan was made, a mass burn incinerator was considered. Fortunately, many people were opposed to it and it was dropped. Unfortunately, what we do have are backyard mini-incinerators. Since there are specific times for burning, a great deal of pollution is emitted into the atmosphere at one time. Every resident in the county has been exposed to noxious and hazardous smoke from burn barrels. We have come a long way with recycling and becoming more aware of the seriousness of pollution and environmental changes in Blair County. Many areas have unusable water, flooding because of lack of wetlands, and air clouded with smoke and fumes from open burning. Hopefully, the municipalities of Blair County will consider a ban on open burning not just because of drought conditions but also for our health and the health of our environment. Write or call your local township or municipal officials and let them know that you support a total ban of open burning.

WETLANDS IN DANGER!

PENNSYLVANIA WETLANDS REGULATIONS - Juniata Valley Audubon Society Conservation Committee members Paula Ford and Craig Cameron presented testimony on behalf of JVAS when DER proposed new wetlands regulations in 1990. The final regulations were approved by the Environmental Quality Board on 18 June 1991. The Independent Regulatory Review Commission, the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, and the House Conservation Committee will now review the final regulations. We will have copies of the final regulations and the Comment/Response Document at the September meeting. You will find useful information for your letters to Congresspersons and Senators in regard to the federal wetlands fiasco.

FEDERAL WETLANDS REGULATIONS - Wetlands play key economic, health, and recreational roles in a community, in addition to providing critical wildlife habitat. Wetlands guard against flooding, provide spawning and "nursery" areas for commercially important fisheries, offer opportunities for hunting and fishing, control pollution, trap sediment, and recharge drinking water supplies. The primary tool for wetlands protection at the federal level is Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which sets up a permitting system for regulating a small subset of activities on wetlands. The 1990 Farm Bill also protects wetlands from conversion to crops. A determined and well-financed coalition of interests that believe themselves to be hampered by wetlands regulations are waging a campaign to weaken Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Representatives of farm, housebuilding, oil and gas, and road construction lobbying organizations have visited virtually every congressional office and have promoted amendments to the Clean Water Act that would destroy the program.

We strongly urge all Audubon members to speak out against weakening of the Clean Water Act. Please have friends, neighbors, and coworkers sign the petition below and bring it to the September 24th meeting or send it to the address indicated.

WHEREAS: Wetlands play a vital role in environmental and economic health, providing flood control and filtering pollutants and sediments from our water, and maintaining a diversity of species,

WHEREAS: The definition of a wetland as stated in the 1/10/89 "Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands" was arrived at through sound science, and is used by regulatory and non-regulatory programs which reach beyond those regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act,

WHEREAS: The existing broad definition of a wetland will allow for a multi-step review process which can and should take into account variation in the value of wetlands, and

WHEREAS: A narrow, politically motivated definition of wetlands as proposed would block protection of environmentally significant lands, and would be devastating to our environment,

THEREFORE: We, the undersigned, are **OPPOSED** to weakening or narrowing the technical definition of a wetland in the "Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands". We want Section 404 of the Clean Water Act **STRENGTHENED, NOT WEAKENED.**

NAME	ADDRESS
1.	-----
2.	-----
3.	-----
4.	-----
5.	-----
6.	-----

Send to Craig Cameron, 206 Hickory St., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

FORT ROBERDEAU: Please come to observe the progress we've made at the observation/feeding area. The dogwood we planted is in memory of Wilson Kreitz, the hollies in memory of Al Burd, and the yews and rhododendrons in memory of Gene Root. The field guides in the observation area will be in memory of Doris Thurheimer.

SAVE REGISTER RECEIPTS FROM BI-LO AND RIVERSIDE and bring them to the next meeting or send them directly to ANNE BORLAND, 138A Larch St., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. Thanks!

AUDUBON COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA: The fall meeting of ACP will take place at Canoe Creek State Park on October 18, 19, and 20. Many interesting topics will be presented. We encourage all to attend. Contact Paula Ford more details and a complete agenda.

THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR THE OCTOBER GNATCATCHER IS OCTOBER 8th. Please submit articles to the editor, Stan Kotala, RD 3, Box 866, Altoona, PA 16601.