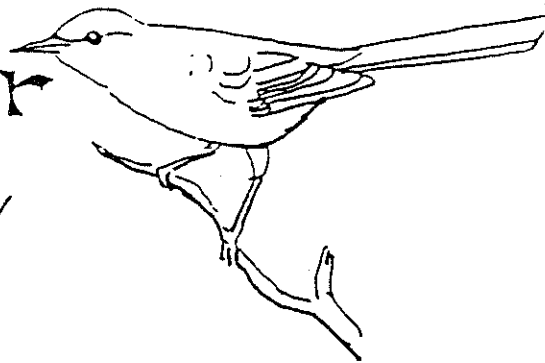


The Gnatcatcher



JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

JANUARY 1994

JANUARY PROGRAM: THE COYOTE IN PENNSYLVANIA

Arnold Hayden, a biologist with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, will examine the status and management practices of this little known resident of the Commonwealth.

TIME: 25 January 1994 at 7:30 PM

PLACE: 5th Avenue United Methodist Church
5th Avenue and 4th Street
Altoona

HAWK MOUNTAIN FIELD TRIP by Gregory Schroy

There was a time in my life when animals such as birds meant very little to me. They would pass over my head without me paying attention. They would make noise at six in the morning and wake me, but, worst of all, their guano bombs never seemed to miss my car windows.

I really did not know what to expect from our Altoona Area Vo-Tech School field trip to Hawk Mountain. After all, you really cannot appreciate something that you know very little about. Before we reached our destination, I had mixed feelings as to why we were hauling ourselves halfway across the state to take a gander at hawks making their way from point "A" to point "B." As my car pushed itself up the incline of Hawk Mountain, I was enthralled by the large number of vehicles that were parked there. I never thought so many people would congregate on a mountaintop for the same reason, unless of course Moses were in charge of the festivities. When I finally arrived, it occurred to me that people are extremely serious about the welfare and preservation of raptors.

As my trek towards the south lookout began and my powers of observation developed, the sheer enjoyment of hawk-watching was evident by the smiles on all the visitors' faces as I passed them on my way. While at the south lookout, I was a bit dismayed at the sight of these people. I always imagined bird-watchers as lonely people who stood about with binoculars in hand and followed their subject until it disappeared from view. These people sat there, on cold rocks, with chilly winds gusting, intent on spotting raptors. They would say to one another, "over the pinnacle, going towards the Donat." Total curiosity made me raise my binoculars in the direction of the spotted hawk. In the distance, I saw a speck at first, then a bird of prey. I believe that my appreciation for these beautiful animals began right then and there.

A red-shouldered hawk, a sleek buteo, became my subject of fascination. Realizing that it was only second before it would be out of sight, I felt that my mind was trying to register a picture without any film. I saw the bird, but could not identify the species. I wanted to know what it was before anyone else. I wanted to be the one who said, "red-shouldered hawk." When an elderly gentleman identified it before me, my first feeling was that of anger, and then I realized maybe I'll call the next one.

Although my knowledge of raptors is almost nil, it became like a game show, like "Jeopardy," on the subject of accipiters and buteos, with every bird that came flying over the ridge as a daily double. Understanding why people were so interested in

these birds became more evident as I watched what they watched, listened, and soaked up data, much like a sponge. My attitude towards birds changed within the first two hours of our arrival. They are something very beautiful to watch. Excitingly quick and extremely fierce hunters, hawks are some of God's finest creatures.

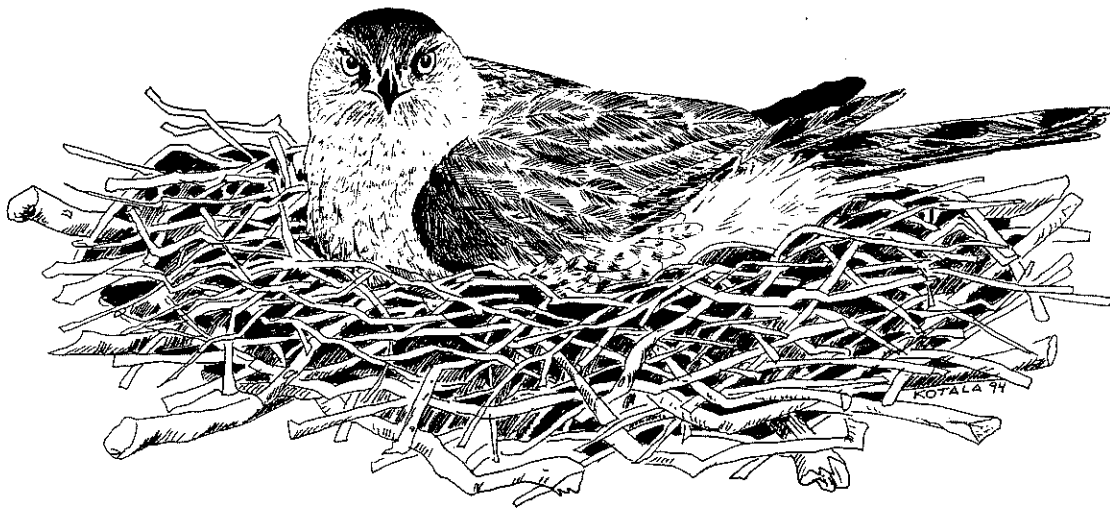
BI-LO / RIVERSIDE RECEIPTS

Bi-Lo and Riverside receipts are being collected by Anne Borland, 138a Larch St., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. Our chapter obtains significant funds from the receipts that you send to Anne. Let's all save those receipts and send them in!

SPECIAL AREAS PROJECTS by Stan Kotala

JVAS has participated in the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology's Special Areas Projects by conducting bird population surveys in 1992 and 1993 at Canoe Creek State Park, in 1993 at Trough Creek State Park, and in 1993 at Fort Roberdeau County Park. We have done this as our part of the National Audubon Society's Birds in the Balance campaign. The greatest diversity of bird life has been found at Canoe Creek State Park, where 173 species were seen over the past two years. Trough Creek State Park yielded 95 species last year and Fort Roberdeau had 93 species.

The counts at Canoe Creek will continue in 1994 on a bimonthly basis. The Fort Roberdeau County Park counts will be held on a biweekly schedule. The Trough Creek surveys will be discontinued. For 1994, we intend to add a new area, either the Lower Trail Rails to Trails project or the Little Juniata Water Gap Natural Area in Rothrock State Forest, to our Special Areas Projects. If you are interested in surveying the birdlife of either of these areas, contact me at (814) 946-8840 or RD 3, Box 866, Altoona, PA 16601.



Cooper's Hawk on Nest by Stan Kotala

WILD RESOURCE CONSERVATION LICENSE PLATE by Stan Kotala

The form for ordering the new Wild Resource Conservation Fund license plate is on page 3 of this newsletter. If you want to order this attractive license plate for your vehicle, simply fill out the form and send it along with your check for \$35 to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, P.O. Box 67900, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7900. You may want to make a few copies of the form to keep in your car's glove box, since several fellow motorists have asked me where they could obtain this plate after they saw it on my truck. Money derived from the sale of these plates will be distributed to Pennsylvania's Wild Resource Conservation Fund for their programs dealing with nongame wildlife.

MV-905 (5-93) APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 Department of Transportation
 Bureau of Motor Vehicles
 Harrisburg, PA 17122



WILD RESOURCE
 CONSERVATION FUND
 REGISTRATION PLATE

Fee: \$35.00

FOR BUREAU USE ONLY

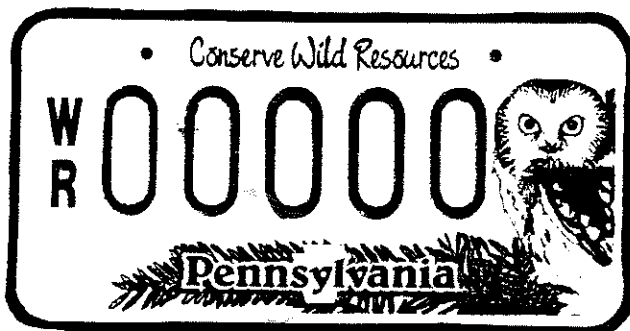
A VEHICLE DESCRIPTION AND APPLICANT INFORMATION (complete this section exactly as information appears on current registration card)				
TITLE NUMBER		VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER		
CURRENT REGISTRATION PLATE NUMBER		CURRENT EXPIRATION	MAKE OF VEHICLE	YEAR
LAST NAME	JR. etc.	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL	
STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
TELEPHONE NUMBER: HOME () _____ WORK () _____				
In conjunction with replacement of your plate, you will receive one registration card. If additional registration cards are desired, the fee is \$1.00 for each card.			How many extra registration cards do you want? _____	
I certify that all information given on this application is true and correct.				
X _____		_____ Date		

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING A WILD RESOURCE CONSERVATION FUND REGISTRATION PLATE

- Fee required with this application is one check or money order in the amount of \$35.00. (NOTE: \$15.00 from the fee of this plate will go to the Wild Resource Conservation Fund.) Payment is to be made by check or money order payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **DO NOT SEND CASH.**
- No Wild Resource Conservation Fund registration plate will be duplicated. If your plate is lost or stolen, we will reissue you the next available plate in our series for \$5.00. To apply for replacement, complete Form MV-44 and submit with the required fee.
- Requests for Wild Resource Conservation Fund registration plates are restricted to vehicles with a registered gross weight of not more than 9,000 lbs. Motorcycles and trailers do not qualify for Wild Resources Conservation Fund registration plates.
- **NO REFUND OF FEE** will be issued when applicant cancels request after order is placed.
- This application, completed in full, along with a check or money order should be mailed to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, P.O. Box 67900, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7900.
- All telephone numbers will be held in confidence and used only in the event of a problem with your application.
- Wild Resources Conservation Fund plates are in number sequence only and may not be personalized.

THIS FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED

Messenger No. _____



THE FRAGMENTED FOREST by Stan Kotala

The importance of large tracts of unbroken forest to the survival of neotropical migrants was demonstrated recently in a paper published by James Bednarz, Laurie Goodrich, Jeff Hoover, Paul Porneluzzi, and Nancy Zawada in Conservation Biology (Volume 7, Number 3, pages 618-622). Their study of ovenbirds in eastern Pennsylvania demonstrated that forests of less than 450 acres are unsuitable for raising a brood successfully. Thus, small wooded parcels simply are population sinks for ovenbirds. Successfully breeding birds generally inhabited continuous woodlands of greater than 3/4 square mile area. The authors postulate that the reason for the lack of nesting success in the smaller woodlands is increased predation in those areas. It is thus essential that those large tracts of unbroken forest that remain be kept that way and not fragmented into small parcels which would cause further decline in the numbers of our neotropical songbirds.

THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR THE FEBRUARY GNATCATCHER IS FEBRUARY 8. Please submit articles to the editor, Stan Kotala, R.D. 3, Box 866, Altoona, PA 16601.

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
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ALTOONA, PA 16603

