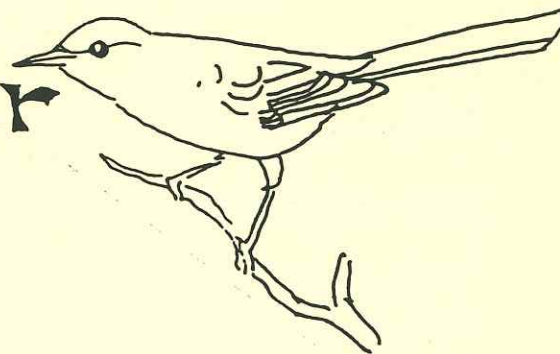


# The Gnatcatcher



## Newsletter of the Juniata Valley Audubon Society

P.O. Box 2378, Altoona, Pennsylvania 16603

September 1994

### Silver Jubilee for JVAS!

September 29 marks 25 years since the Juniata Valley Audubon Society was granted a charter by the National Audubon Society. As your new editor of *The Gnatcatcher*, I'm delighted to congratulate the JVAS directors and all members as you celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Juniata Valley Audubon Society. At the same time, I enthusiastically look forward to serve as your newsletter editor for a good chunk of the next quarter century!

First let me thank Stan Kotala, former editor and now president of the JVAS, for his dedication in producing excellent newsletters for the past four years. It's hoped that I can "follow in his footsteps" in presenting you with news and opinion about present and planned chapter activities along with local, regional, and national conservation issues.

In speaking with Colette Heller, she thought it would be great if there were more reports from members on unusual bird sightings or other items of a local flavor. I agree, and urge all of you to send me any reports you feel may be of interest to our other members.

In keeping with Stan's use of illustrations to add life to the newsletter, I ask you to lend me your sketches and line drawings for publication. In addition, any good photographs of our group activities, such as field trips, also will be welcome.

*The Gnatcatcher* is the JVAS leaders' only regular means of reaching our far-flung chapter members. The newsletter plays a key role in attracting members to chapter meetings, and it brings reports of those meetings to members who don't attend. Last, it will continue to let you know about the latest developments in JVAS activities and campaigns.

So, as the Juniata Valley Audubon Society heads toward its Gold Jubilee, let's all plan to become more involved, starting with attending our fine activities that begin this month (*see box*). — Ed.

#### **September Program**

*"NATURE POTPOURRI" — Jeremy Woodhouse will present another of his fabulous slide shows.*

*7:15 p.m., Monday, Sept. 26 at 5th Avenue United Methodist Church, 5th Ave. & 4th St., Altoona*

#### **Fall Audubon Council of Pennsylvania Meeting**

*Weekend of Sept. 23-25 at Canoe Creek State Park  
(See page 4)*

#### **Field Trip**

*"BEGINNING BIRDING" with trip leader Stan Kotala*

*2:30 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 16 at Fort Roberdeau County Park*

#### **Next Board Meeting**

*7 p.m., Monday, Nov. 7 at President Stan Kotala's residence.  
All members are welcome. Phone Stan at 946-8840 for directions.*



## From the Gnatcatcher's Nest ...

Our nation's most important law with respect to nature, the Endangered Species Act, is a subject of intense debate in Washington. Excellent amendments strengthening the act have been offered recently in the U.S. Senate. Amendments to Senate bill S 921 promote economic and environmental stability rather than a "boom and bust" economy. They emphasize the conservation of ecosystems as a whole, mandate the designation of habitat critical for endangered species, and offer greater incentives to private landowners to protect species.

I strongly encourage all JVAS members to write to Senators Wofford and Specter, urging them to support the conservation amendments to S 921 and vote to strengthen the Endangered Species Act.

Please write *today* — your letters are important!

The Honorable Harris Wofford  
United States Senate  
277 Russell Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510



The Honorable Arlen Specter  
United States Senate  
331 Hart Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20510



## North American Bird Migration Count

This year's spring North American Migration Count took place on May 14. It was a nationwide census of birds conducted on a county level.

In Blair County, 12 of our JVAS members counted 104 species — two more species than those of 1993. Next year's count will be on Saturday, May 13.



## Northeast Conference On Endangered Species Act

October 22-23, 1994

Pocono Manor, Pa.

The Endangered Species Coalition is hosting a Northeast conference on the Endangered Species Act, the landmark law presently before Congress for reauthorization. The gathering of conservationists, scientists, and others will grapple with issues, hear from interesting speakers, and lay out plans for future action. The conference will focus on how the average citizen can help in the effort to reauthorize the Act. We encourage everyone to attend.

The conference will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 22 and 23 at Pocono Manor Inn, in Pocono Manor, Pa.

As the Endangered Species Act moves forward in Congress, it is crucial for citizens throughout the Northeast to step up and get involved. This issue has now reached the front burner and decisions will be made soon that could fundamentally alter the Endangered Species Act. We must make sure that these changes are positive — that they make the Act more effective and do not weaken it.

For information and how to register, call Tom McClure, the Coalition's Northeast Coordinator, at (203) 278-8890. A brochure has been prepared, and some rooms are blocked at Pocono Manor Inn. Room reservations will be more difficult to obtain after September 20, so register early. — Ed.

## October Field Trip to Dunlo Bog

**Sunday, Oct. 23.** Mark your calendars for a JVAS-Seneca Rocks A.S. field trip led by Paula Ford to the Dunlo Strip Mine Reclamation Area of the Gallitzin State Forest in Cambria Co. The area includes several hundred acres of grasslands and a bog. Look for more information about this special field trip in the October issue of *The Gnatcatcher*.

## CONSERVATION

O  
R Recently, the Pesticide Notification Act,  
N House Bill 988, passed in the Pennsylvania  
E House. The bill is now pending in the State  
R Senate, and since Senator Robert Jubelirer is  
President Pro Tem, he will be a key player in  
the outcome of this bill.

The bill is an important one. It would require school districts to:

- notify parents when pesticides would be applied to school buildings or on school grounds;
- post areas at least 72 hours in advance of pesticide application until 48 hours after application;
- maintain records of all chemical pest control applications; and
- develop integrated pest management (IPM) plans that would require schools to develop chemical-free alternatives to pest control.

Attempts have been made to weaken this bill, but this is a win-win bill. If passed, it will provide a measure of increased safety for our children and the people who work in schools, and it will save money. For example, the Anne Arundel County School District in Maryland switched to IPM and cut its pest control budget from \$46,000 to \$14,000.

Exposure to pesticides has been linked to many health problems ranging from nausea and dizziness to cancer. Sometimes the effects are not seen until years after exposure. Just think of how DDT was once considered perfectly safe.

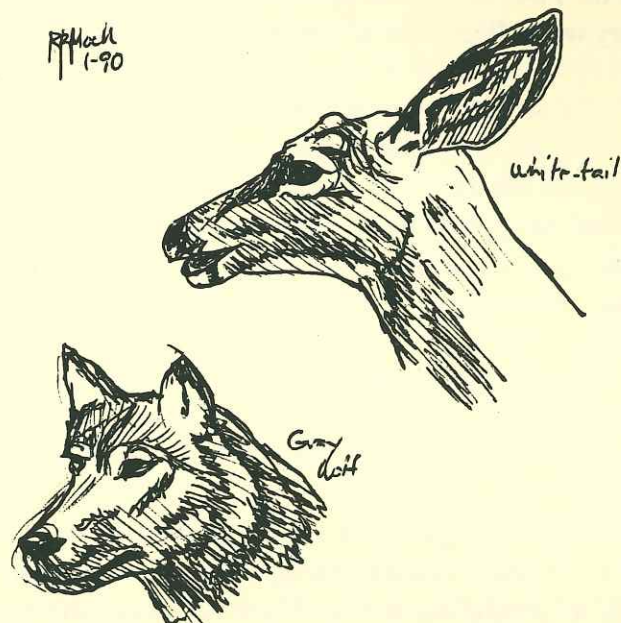
Please write to Senator Jubelirer and ask him to support HB 988. His address is P.O. Box 2023, Altoona, PA 16603.

Or call his local office at 942-5495. — PF

## Chapter Actions

In August the JVAS Board of Directors took the following actions.

- Wrote a letter to Representative Bud Shuster urging him to support HR 2043 to strengthen the Endangered Species Act.
- Wrote a letter to Art Davis, chairman of the Environmental Quality Board of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, urging the designation of Elk Creek and Pine Creek in Centre County as "exceptional value waters." The letter expressed support for the goals of the Penns Valley Conservation Association.
- Attended a meeting with Pennsylvania Department of Transportation officials regarding the alignment of the new Route 220 link between Bald Eagle and State College. Expressed concerns dealing with the issues of forest fragmentation, wetlands destruction, stream degradation, groundwater contamination, morbidity and mortality to migrating raptors using Bald Eagle Ridge, and highway safety. (K)



### ACP to Meet at Canoe Creek State Park

The Audubon Council of Pennsylvania will meet Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 23-25, at Canoe Creek State Park.

Highlights of the agenda include socializing and sharing your favorite slides on Friday evening. On Saturday, the agenda will begin with a report on the activities of our state office and a report from Cindy Dunn, our regionally elected NAS board member.

Saturday's agenda also includes chapter sharing, the reintroduction of Peregrine Falcons in Williamsport (Lycoming A.S.), and creating a county bird list (Seneca Rocks A.S.). On Saturday afternoon two concurrent workshops will be held. One will be devoted to conservation issues and the other to fund-raising for the Council and the chapters.

A work session with ACP regional representatives is planned for Saturday morning. Our region includes the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh), the Allegheny Plateau A.S. (Johnstown), and the JVAS. I serve as regional representative on the ACP board, so if any members of the JVAS are unable to attend but have concerns they would like to see addressed, please contact me.

On Saturday evening at 6 there will be a group dinner. At 7:30, Mike and Laura Jackson will show slides of Honduras and share our chapter's successful exchange with Honduran environmental educators. If you missed last September's program, here's your chance to see Mike and Laura's slides.

Sunday morning will be devoted to a bird walk, a wrap-up of the regional reps' meetings, and an executive committee meeting (all are welcome).

ACP meetings are a lot of fun and very informative. It always re-charges my batteries to attend. Try it! You'll like it, too. If you'd like to register for any or all of the weekend meetings, please call Paula Ford at 695-4799 for information. — PF



### JVAS Officers and Chairpersons 1994-1995

President . . . . .	Stan Kotala
Vice President . . . . .	Bill King
Secretary . . . . .	Eugene Zielinski
Treasurer . . . . .	Amy King
Corresponding Secretary . . . . .	Amy King
Membership . . . . .	Marcia Bonta
Newsletter . . . . .	Charlie Hoyer
Conservation . . . . .	Paula Ford
Education . . . . .	Collette Heller
International Issues . . . . .	Bruce Bonta
Field Trips . . . . .	Janet Huber
Hospitality . . . . .	Amy King
Birds in the Balance . . . . .	Stan Kotala
Historian . . . . .	Barb Baird
Christmas Bird Count . . . . .	Angeline Stout
Wetlands . . . . .	Theodora Kreitz
A.C.P. Representative . . . . .	Paula Ford
Director . . . . .	Marcia Bonta
Director . . . . .	Anne Borland
Director . . . . .	Francis Burgoon
Director . . . . .	David Kyler



### Grassland Bird Survey

The 1994 JVAS Grassland Bird Survey, conducted in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, took place on Saturday, June 12 in the early morning fog of Sinking Valley.

Six of the 13 sought-after grassland species were seen or heard. The most common grassland species encountered was the Savannah Sparrow — 20 individuals in 30 stops — followed by:

Eastern Meadowlark — eight  
Killdeer — six  
Vesper Sparrow — five  
Field Sparrow — five  
Ring-necked Pheasant — two

No Bobwhites, Upland Sandpipers, Horned Larks, Dickcissels, Grasshopper Sparrows, Henslow's Sparrows, or Bobolinks were seen or heard.

We have covered this particular survey route annually in June since 1991. The route consists of 30 stops each 1/2 mile apart. The duration of every stop is 3 minutes, during which we record each of the 13 indicated species we see or hear.

At the present time 35 Grassland Bird Survey routes are traversed yearly in Pennsylvania. If you would like to start your own route or participate in the JVAS June route, please contact Stan Kotala at 946-8840. (K)

### Thank You

The JVAS would like to express appreciation to the following people for their memorial contributions to Janet Neely and Truth Close.

Mary Fleck, Jack and Janet DeMuth, Katharine Everts, Colette Heller, Alice Goodlin, Juniata Gap Fire Company Ladies' Auxiliary, C. Berry, Anne Borland, and Barb Corle. — AK

### Fisher Reintroduction

Prior to European colonization, the fisher, *Martes pennanti*, resided throughout Pennsylvania, except for the southeastern section. Logging and unregulated trapping for fur resulted in a drastic decline in their numbers and their probable extirpation in the Commonwealth. The last specimen in the Keystone State was collected in 1921.

Penn State biologists Tom Serfass and Rob Brooks have been studying the feasibility of reintroducing fishers to Pennsylvania and have concluded that there is considerable potential for success. Fishers have been reintroduced to New York and West Virginia.

These cat-sized members of the weasel family inhabit large forests with an unbroken canopy. Such conditions are found in the north central portion of our state, the favored site for reintroduction.

This fall the Pennsylvania Game Commission may authorize fisher reintroduction to be overseen by Arnold Hayden, supervisor of the agency's furbearer management section.

If the proposal becomes reality, another piece of Pennsylvania's natural history will be restored to its rightful place in the Keystone State. Letters supporting this initiative should be directed to:

Peter S. Duncan, Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
2001 Elmerton Ave.  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797 (K)

### Send Your Bi Lo/Riverside Receipts to Anne

Please send your grocery receipts from Bi Lo Foods and Riverside Markets to Anne Borland, at 138A Larch St., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. She redeems the receipts for \$\$\$ for our JVAS Chapter. Thank you, and keep 'em comin'! — Ed.



## Welcome New JVAS Members!

We extend a hearty welcome to the following new members who have joined the Juniata Valley Audubon Society from January 1 through July 31. Transfers into the Chapter are marked with an asterisk.

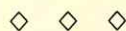
David J. Adams, of Altoona  
 Daniel Dey Armin, of Westover  
 Ms. Eliza Baker, of New Enterprise  
 Ms. Ethel Baker, of Altoona  
 Janet L. Baker, of Hesston  
 Kelly Baronner, of Hollidaysburg  
 Chris Beaver, of Altoona  
 Robert Branstetter, of Tyrone  
 Grace B. Carles, of Altoona  
 Edmund Comp, of Bedford  
 Mrs. Mary E. Cramer, of Duncansville  
 Arlene B. Cunningham, of Huntingdon  
 Robert C. Daniels, of Altoona  
 Ethel S. DeCarlo, of Robertsdale  
 Helen Dickson, of Huntingdon  
 Carolyn E. Dubois, of Duncansville  
 Edwin Elder, of Huntingdon  
 Anita Feathers, of Bedford  
 Mrs. Guy Ferguson, of Manns Choice  
 Ms. Joyce A. Ferguson, of New Paris  
 Mrs. Mary K. Figard, of Breezewood  
 William Fine, of New Paris  
 Donald Foor, of Everett  
 Beth Frank, of Duncansville  
 Brenda Frazer, of Roaring Spring  
 \*Ruth J. Glass, of Bedford  
 Robert E. Green, of Hollidaysburg  
 Maxine K. Griffith, of Tyrone  
 Walter Grove, of Duncansville  
 Donna J. Gutshall, of Altoona  
 Ms. Myrtle N. Haldeman, of Clearville  
 Sharonn Halderman, of Altoona  
 W.T. Heit, Jr., of Bedford  
 Cindy L. Henderson, of Altoona  
 Dr. & Mrs. William Hilshey, of Hollidaysburg  
 Jack Hohman, of Huntingdon  
 Lisa Hoover, of Hollidaysburg  
 Ms. Alma Houck, of Robertsdale  
 Linda G. Houp, of James Creek  
 \*Charlie Hoyer, of Sinking Valley  
 Edward W. Hughes, of Hollidaysburg  
 David L. Humm, of Gallitzin  
 Charles Hunter, of Tyrone  
 Elizabeth Huss, of Altoona  
 K. June, of Altoona  
 Susan A. Karle, of Altoona  
 Kevin C. Kennedy, of Altoona  
 KENNETH'S ART IN NATURE, of Martinsburg  
 Ms. Helen Kiracofe, of Hollidaysburg  
 Christine Knepp, of Roaring Spring  
 Edward Koontz, of Cresson

Ms. Liz Largent, of Altoona  
 Jason Lewis, of Huntingdon  
 W.R. Lightner, of Claysburg  
 Mrs. J. Long, of Martinsburg  
 \*Robert Maher, of Gallitzin  
 Mrs. Marie Markwood, of Martinsburg  
 Jane Martino, of Altoona  
 Susan L. Matula, of Clearville  
 John T. McCall, of Altoona  
 Jane W. McCartney, of Fallentimber  
 Joe McCutcheon, of Sinking Valley  
 Robert McKee, of Altoona  
 E. Miller, of Altoona  
 Dena Mottern, of Fallentimber  
 Shirley Mowry, of Schellsburg  
 Ms. Anita M. Moyer, of Bedford  
 Joseph Musselman, of Hollidaysburg  
 David M. Nickola, of Duncansville  
 Ms. Mary K. Niswonger, of Duncansville  
 Mark L. Oldham, of Martinsburg  
 Katiebeth Oliver, of Huntingdon  
 Mary Orr, of Gallitzin  
 Ms. Cornelia Palmer, of Duncansville  
 Russell Penner, of Bedford  
 Angela Pentsas, of Altoona  
 Tim Price, of Tyrone  
 James Pritchard, of Altoona  
 Richard A. Reed, of Huntingdon  
 Lynne Glenn Rice, of Tyrone  
 Boyd S. Ritchey, of Everett  
 Miss Lisa Rose, of Altoona  
 Michael Sandaval, of Cresson  
 Frank E. Sangiorgio, of Altoona  
 Ms. Christina Schoenfeld, of Loretto  
 Roxanne Shank, of Huntingdon  
 Russel Shelley, of Huntingdon  
 Alice V. Smith, of Clearville  
 Mrs. K.B. Smith, of Bedford  
 Ernest J. Snyder, of Duncansville  
 Mrs. Marla R. Sorrells, of Everett  
 Dottie Stampfle, of Huntingdon  
 Eleanor Strause, of Cassville  
 Dana Streamer, of Clearville  
 James Stuart, of Duncansville  
 Robert W. Stufft, of Osterburg  
 David A. Thomas, of Altoona  
 Dennis J. Troutman, of Riddlesburg  
 Cassandra L. Weidel, of Huntingdon  
 Ms. V.L. Welteroth, of Altoona  
 Tom West, of Houtzdale  
 Dorothy R. White, of Huntingdon  
 Jennifer Wiegand, of Hollidaysburg  
 William A. Wilkinson, of Dysart  
 Delilah Williams, of Claysburg  
 Theo A. Williams, of Duncansville  
 Ronald G. Wilson, of Altoona  
 Thomas L. Winnick, of Huntingdon  
 Matthew Yoder, of Altoona  
 Harold R. Yohn, of Altoona  
 Paula Zan, of Hyndman



## Odds 'n Ends

Colette Heller reports that this past breeding season there were successful nestings of Hooded Warblers and Scarlet Tanagers on Bill Burch's property on the back road to Tipton. Colette also noted the early fall arrival of three Black Ducks on the Little Juniata River near the Bellwood Cemetery.



There's a Screech Owl that regularly visits a back porch of a Bellwood home mornings and evenings. It readily accepts lettuce from the inhabitants for its breakfast and supper.



Motorists should be on the lookout for deer when traveling our rural roadways. This is especially true during the next few months when deer are more active (and careless) due to the fall breeding season.

When you sight a deer near the highway, please slow down. Be cautious in the event the deer bolts toward the highway, rather than away from it.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has reported the tally for deer mortality on the recently opened stretch of Route 220 from the 17th Street exit to Bellwood. Since the August 9 opening through the remainder of the month 31 deer were killed by vehicles along this stretch. Included in the 31 kills were 26 doe and five males. This doesn't account for any deer that went into the forest and later perished due to injuries. Additionally, a 100-pound male bear was killed along the new highway.

Deer struck along the highway may be picked up by the public; however, it's necessary to obtain a permit to keep and use the deer. Persons picking up deer must call the Game Commission within 24 hours for a permit. The toll-free number for the Blair County area is 1-800-422-7554. — Ed.

## No One Knows

By Jack Cupper

*Bullwhip saga, the story goes,  
Its dreadful ending no one knows.  
Little ones being beat to death,  
Earth's pieces looking for breath.*

*She said, "Hug me with tender care,  
And you will be blessed with drink and air."  
We go on in greedy want and no bending,  
With wealth amassed and no relenting.*

*King of the living, we see no wrong,  
Breaking cycles until the final gong.  
Tell me, how do I give this tender care?  
By wanting less and being fair.*

*Bullwhip saga, the story goes,  
When it will end no one knows.  
Life will stop when time runs out  
And there's no more wealth for us to tout.*

## New Book by Marcia Bonta

JVAS Director Marcia Bonta's brand-new book, *Appalachian Autumn*, is available at bookstores now. Like Marcia's popular *Appalachian Spring*, this new book gives day-by-day accounts of the changing world of nature on Brush Mountain. This time she chronicles the beauties of the autumn months on her mountaintop while trying to flee from the whine of chain saws, the crash of falling trees, and the din of a logging skidder on a neighboring property.

Loggers' clear-cutting of adjacent land while Marcia was writing her "book to be a praise-song for an Appalachian autumn" empowered her to proffer a new voice in the ongoing debate between mankind's desire for profit and the natural world.

Portions of Marcia's book first appeared in the *Altoona Mirror*, *Pennsylvania Game News*, and other publications. — Ed.

**Dan Sinal's Impromptu Field Trips**

JVAS member Dan Sinal will be conducting spur-of-the-moment day field trips to Pennsylvania sites and surrounding areas.

If anyone is interested in participating, please give your phone number to Dan and he will call you a day or two in advance to let you know where his going. Dan's phone number is 793-4457. — JH

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**Fall Nature Programs  
At Canoe Creek State Park**

The following are upcoming nature walks at Canoe Creek State Park. All programs meet at the new Visitor Center.

Sunday, Sept. 18

2 p.m. — Autumn wildflower walk

7 p.m. — Evening beaver watch

Saturday, Oct. 8

2 p.m. — Fall foliage hike

7:30 p.m. — Owl prowls

— Ed.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The deadline for October's issue of *The Gnatcatcher* is October 11. Please submit articles to editor Charlie Hoyer, P.O. Box 32, Tyrone, PA 16686-0032.

**Juniata Valley Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 2378**  
**Altoona, PA 16603**

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