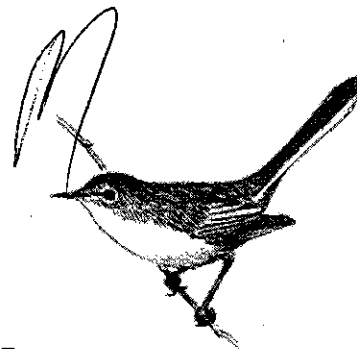


THE GNATCATCHER

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon



Vol. 37 No. 5—Sept/Oct 2005

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JVAS COMPLETES PINEY CREEK AVIAN ASSESSMENT

The Piney Creek Avian Assessment Project was started by Juniata Valley Audubon a year ago as part of the Blair County Conservation District's comprehensive assessment of the watershed of Piney Creek, a High Quality (HQ) stream in Woodbury and Huston Townships, Blair County, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the avian assessment was to determine the species of birds that use the Piney Creek watershed.

The Piney Creek Avian Assessment Project began on September 1, 2004 and ended on August 30, 2005. JVAS volunteers visited the watershed monthly from September 2004 till March 2005, and then weekly from April 2005 till July 2005 (more frequent visitation to determine breeding status of birds found in the watershed). This project meshed perfectly with the second Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas, a five-year project started in 2004 by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

The variety and numbers of birds found during the Juniata Valley Audubon Piney Creek Avian Assessment Project indicate that the watershed is in good health. In particular, species dependent on Piney Creek and its tributaries for their food, such as the Louisiana Waterthrush (eats aquatic macroinvertebrates) and the Belted Kingfisher (eats fish), were very common, indicating good water quality. In total, 131 species of birds used the Piney Creek watershed during the past year. Of these, 87 species nested in the watershed. This is approximately the same number of species found along the Lower Trail during the Special Areas Project done there a decade ago. By comparison, 220 species of birds can be found in the Canoe Creek watershed, and 110 species regularly use the Canoe Creek watershed for nesting. The much greater variety of birds in the Canoe Creek watershed is due to the presence of Canoe Lake and large areas of wetlands associated with Canoe Creek, particularly along its headwaters in State Game Lands 166.

There was quite a diversity of birdlife in the Piney Creek watershed, reflecting a variety of habitats, including forested ridgesides (much of which is protected as State Game Lands 147), riparian areas, fallow fields, early successional zones, and agricultural areas. A healthy population of raptors indicated good habitat conditions and healthy populations of species lower on the food chain.

The landowners in the Piney Creek watershed are to be commended for their stewardship of the resources in this exceptional area. Many thanks to all JVAS members who participated in this important project!

Growing Greener II becomes Law

On Wednesday, July 13, Governor Rendell signed into law legislation to implement the \$625 million Growing Greener bond approved by voters in the May primary election. With 61 percent approving the measure, Pennsylvania voters made a strong statement of support for conservation.

On July 7, our elected officials in Harrisburg responded to the wishes of the voters and negotiated a spending plan for the funds which addresses a large variety of environmental concerns in Pennsylvania. Growing Greener will help us protect our land and water, while restoring resilience to the landscape that sustains all Pennsylvanians.

The bond will increase funding to the Growing Greener program begun under the Ridge/Schweiker administration and continued under Governor Rendell. Funds will be used for open space, forest, and farmland preservation; watershed protection; abandoned mine reclamation; acid mine drainage remediation and other environmental programs.

Growing Greener II bond proceeds will be allocated as follows:

- **\$217.5 million to DCNR, including:**
- **\$90 million for open space**
- **\$100 million for facility and infrastructure at state parks and forests**
- **\$230 million to DEP for existing programs**
- **\$60 million for acid mine drainage abatement and mine cleanup**
- **Up to \$10 annually to PA Energy Development Authority for advanced energy projects**
- **Up to \$5 million annually to DCED for brownfields remediation**
- **\$80 million to Dept. of Agriculture for farmland preservation**
- **\$50 million to Dept. of Community and Economic Development for main street and downtown redevelopment related to smart growth**
- **\$27.5 million to Fish and Boat Commission**
- **\$20 million to Game Commission**

Thanks to Pennsylvania's voters, members of the Legislature, Governor Rendell and organizations and community volunteers across the state, the Growing Greener bond funding will allow the Commonwealth to continue its substantial investment in environmental improvements to land and water protection across the state. For the people of Pennsylvania, Growing Greener means a healthier, safer and richer quality of life, and a legacy for generations to come.

"We are entrusted as the stewards of our environment, and have a moral obligation to leave our soil, water and air in better condition than we found it for future generations."

Governor Ed Rendell

JVAS Field Trip to Allegheny Front Hawk Watch scheduled

Scudding low, soaring high, riding the wind on half-furled wings, they came down the long valley, over red and yellow miles of autumn foliage. We could see them from afar through our glasses. Singly, in twos and threes, a dozen at a time, the hawks swept into view. They drew abreast of our cliff. They slid past on almost motionless wings. They grew small in the distance. In this same way, and past this same cliff, autumn hawks for centuries have been riding the invisible updrafts. Each fall, when the trees of the mountainsides, viewed from afar, seem turned to little puffs of colored smoke, the birds soar down this ancient hawkway to the South.

Edwin Way Teale, *The Lost Woods*

The Allegheny Front Hawk Watch is a privately owned 5 acre site situated on the edge of the Allegheny Front approximately 4 miles southeast of Central City, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The high elevation (2780') allows close views of hawks and eagles, with an outstanding panorama to the east. This scenic site is maintained and monitored by members of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society. The hawk watch is dedicated to the study of spring and fall raptor migration along the Allegheny Front and to public education about raptors (i.e., hawks, eagles and falcons). Allegheny Front is noted for its high spring and fall Golden Eagle counts. Other raptor species commonly seen at the watch at the appropriate times during migration include Ospreys, Bald Eagles, Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Cooper's Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, Broad-winged Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels. Rarer species include Northern Goshawks, Rough-legged Hawks, Merlins and Peregrine Falcons. Migration is most pronounced on easterly winds. Although the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch is primarily for use by members of the Allegheny Plateau Audubon Society, visitors are always welcome. Handicapped parking is available and access is easy. The hawk watch is maintained 7 days a week from August 15 through November 30. A spring hawk watch with less coverage usually runs from late February to late April, depending on weather conditions. Visitors are welcome as long as counters are present. However, since this is private property, there is no overnight camping at the site and visitors must leave when the counters close down for the day.

A single day record flight of Golden Eagles at Allegheny Front Hawk Watch was set on 23 November 2003 when 51 Golden Eagles flew past the site. The lucky observers were quite delighted by that flight!

Other interesting animals, including an albino gray squirrel, occasionally show up at Allegheny Hawk Watch. These are also noted when they visit the site. Counts are also maintained of migrating Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Monarch butterflies.

JVAS field trip chair Dave Kyler has scheduled a trip to the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch on Saturday, September 24, 2005. Meet at Unkel Joe's Woodshed in Altoona at 9 AM. Call Dave at 643-6030 if you need more information.

These are the days I live for— frost on the grass and on the rattling cornstalks, wind whipping against the flanks of the ridge, trees bending, and above the tossing bronze and purple landscape, clouds racing toward the sea, hawks streaking southwest.

Michael Harwood, *The View from Hawk Mountain*

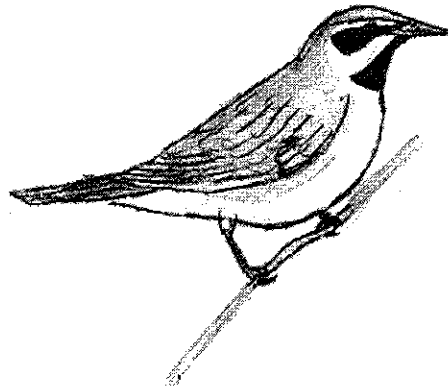
Species of Concern Spotlight: Golden-winged Warbler

By Dan Mummert, Pennsylvania Game Commission Wildlife Diversity Biologist

The golden-winged warbler, like many of our local warblers, is a migrant that spends the fall and winter in Central and northern South America, and spends spring and summer in the eastern half of North America. Here in southcentral Pennsylvania, male golden-wings usually start to arrive between the last week of April and the first week of May. The females, not needing to see the machismo antics of males staking out territories, arrive a week or so later to kick off the annual spring courtship and nesting season.

During the breeding season, golden-winged warblers primarily use what is called early successional habitats most often associated with abandoned farmland, shrubby powerline corridors, and recently clearcut forest. More specifically, according to Jacob Kubel and Richard Yahner, who are studying this bird at Penn State, golden-winged warbler territories in southcentral Pennsylvania usually contain a combination of three features: (1) open patches of herbaceous vegetation, (2) dense thickets of shrubs, and (3) a forest edge. Therefore, if you want to find these warblers, look for a combination of early successional habitat of thickets of shrubs (e.g., scrub oak, dogwood, alder, aspen, etc.)

with a number of interspersed herbaceous openings of grasses and broadleaved plants like goldenrod, and nearby forest edge. Additionally, the herbaceous openings, according to Kubel, often will contain scattered saplings about 2 feet tall, and the shrub layer will usually be from 4-10 feet tall. Occasional trees or snags that are at least 15 feet tall throughout the shrubby areas are useful to the warblers as singing perches.



Golden-winged Warbler by JVAS member
Emily Majcher

With this habitat information in mind, go find our thickest, densest, most inhospitable landscapes and bag a bird by the binoculars. ... Wait a minute: golden-winged warblers are already on their way back to the tropics. So between now and next year, consider allowing some of your lawn to grow wild and create some valuable habitat for golden-wings and other species of concern that could really use a few more acres of early successional habitat such as brown thrasher, yellow-breasted chat, woodcock, and prairie warbler. Annually declining in Pennsylvania by more than 16% since 1990, golden-winged warblers can use a helping hand to ease the ever-increasing pressures of habitat loss.

For a complete list and more information on Pennsylvania species of concern, visit <http://www.pgc.state.pa.us/>, click "Wildlife", click "State Wildlife Grants", click "Priority Species".

Alien Invasive Shrub Removal to take place in JVAS Golden-winged Warbler Management Area

Canoe Creek State Park is offering a workday opportunity to volunteer groups to help remove invasive plants in the JVAS Golden-winged Warbler Management Area on Saturday, September 17 (raindate will be September 24). **The September 17 workday will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. , beginning at the Canoe Creek State Park education center**, then moving into the field. Volunteers will meet at the Education Center to receive training on invasive plants and proper removal techniques. All volunteers will receive information useful for their own backyards. Individual volunteers are invited as well as church groups, scouts, trail and hiking groups, etc. Volunteers should bring gloves and wear long sleeves and long pants, and, since tools are limited, may bring hand saws, bowsaws, chain-saws or weed eaters with a saw blade. Safety glasses are also recommended. Volunteers should bring a lunch, and snacks and water will be provided by the park. **Volunteers should contact park naturalist Heidi Boyle at 814 695 6807, hboyle@state.pa.us for more information or to sign up.**

Volunteers are the backbone, heart, and soul of the restoration movement. And whatever the eventual result of their labors may be, working to revive moribund ecosystems is transforming and strengthening their relationship with the rest of nature in ways that other encounters like outdoor recreation, farming, gardening, and birdwatching cannot. The resulting bond infuses the movement with a remarkable vitality and passion, gives it a certain tensile strength, and bids to extend its influence beyond the restoration enterprise itself to the larger human culture.

William K. Stevens, Miracle under the Oaks

WETLANDS VICTORY!

The conservative Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on June 21 that wetlands adjacent to navigable waterways were protected under the Clean Water Act and can be considered "waters of the United States" as defined by the Act.

In *USA v. Gerke Excavating, Inc.* (412 F. 3d 804; 2005 US App. Lexis 11830) the defendant violated the Clean Water Act by dumping dredged stumps and sand-based fill into wetlands.

Gerke Excavating, Inc. argued that the wetland filled was not "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act because the wetland was not navigable and drains into a nonnavigable waterway.

However, the court ruled that "whether the wetlands are 100 miles away from a navigable waterway or six feet, if water from the wetlands enters a stream that flows into a navigable waterway, the wetlands are 'waters of the United States' as defined by the Act."

New Manager at Canoe Creek State Park

DCNR officials recently announced the appointment of Steven W. Volgstadt, former manager of Bald Eagle State Park, Centre County, as manager of the Canoe Creek State Park Complex

"A veteran of more than 20 years service with the Bureau of State Parks, Steve brings to his new post a solid list of managerial credentials that includes environmental planning, resource management and public relations," said Bureau of State Parks Director Roger Fickes in announcing the June 24 appointment.

Volgstadt will oversee the 959-acre Canoe Creek State Park in Blair County. The complex also includes the 554-acre Trough Creek State Park in Huntingdon County, and Warriors Path State Park, totaling 349 acres, in Bedford County. Located not far from Altoona, Canoe Creek State Park is famous as the home of the largest nursery colony of little brown bats in Pennsylvania as well as the largest colony of federally endangered Indiana bats in the Commonwealth.

"This assignment offers some new challenges that mesh nicely with my past experience with the bureau," Volgstadt said.

"Canoe Creek's bat colony and the conservation efforts under way are very interesting to me. It's also rewarding to see local groups partner with us to provide such extensive hiking opportunities in that area."

Volgstadt replaces Terry L. Wentz, who retired after 24 years of distinguished service as the manager of Canoe Creek State Park. Terry has been active in Juniata Valley Audubon for many years and will continue to serve as the JVAS historian.

JVAS Juniata Club Trip Scheduled for Saturday October 1: Birding by Boat

The JVAS Juniata Club has scheduled a canoeing and kayaking trip on the Little Juniata River in Blair and Huntingdon Counties for Saturday, October 1. This will be a three hour trip of about 8 miles on a Class II river, at a relaxed pace and suitable for all skill levels. Stops to observe stream ecology and to explore the flora and fauna of the river will be included. Please bring your own canoe or kayak, snacks, and drinks. Life vests are required. This trip is in conjunction with the Moshannon Group of the Sierra Club and the Little Juniata River Association. Meet at the westernmost large gravel parking area on the south side of Route 453 just east of the I-99 interchange in Tyrone at noon. Take-out will be at Spruce Creek. Contact trip leader Helena Kotala at ccwiba@keyconn.net or (814)946-8840.



White-tail buck

By JVAS member Dick Mock

Conserving Two Important Bird Areas

In 2003, a private landowner submitted a land development plan to Ferguson Township for his 423-acre property located in Musser Gap, a mountain gap located on Tussey Mountain between Shingletown Gap and Pine Grove Mills. The property borders Rothrock State Forest and is located within two Important Bird Areas (IBA): the *Rothrock Important Bird Area* and the *Tussey Mountain Important Bird Area*. These IBA designations are attributed to the mature, unfragmented deciduous forest habitat that Rothrock State Forest provides for nesting forest interior neotropical migrants and to the high concentration of Golden Eagles migrating each spring along Tussey Mountain. Conserving Musser Gap would buffer the Rothrock State Forest from development and would also protect over 400 acres of additional forested habitat from fragmentation.

Conservation of Musser Gap will also protect several important water resources. The property hosts several "slope" wetlands, which are fed by groundwater and located on the mountainside. An unnamed tributary of Slab Cabin Run also flows through the Gap. Additionally, as is typical for all mountain gaps in the area, Musser Gap is also very important to groundwater recharge. Water flowing from the gap passes over areas underlain with lower permeability sandstone and shale to areas underlain by limestone. Beginning at this geological transition point, water quickly infiltrates into the ground. Because of Musser Gap's close proximity to two State College Borough Water Authority well fields, protecting the Gap will also protect an important contributor to the drinking water supply for State College.

Recognizing the valuable natural resources of Musser Gap and their vulnerability, ClearWater Conservancy approached the landowner to discuss conservation alternatives. ClearWater proposed to purchase the Musser Gap property from the landowner. Once purchased, ClearWater would give the property to DCNR's Bureau of Forestry to be incorporated into Rothrock State Forest and developed into a "Forest Gateway", similar to Galbraith and Shingletown Gaps. **Creating the Musser Gap Forest Gateway will protect Rothrock State Forest from additional forest fragmentation, protect a portion of two IBAs, help to protect the water resources of the Spring Creek Watershed, alleviate the over-use of the Shingletown Gap trail system, create new recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors, and protect the viewscape of Tussey Mountain.**

In July 2005, ClearWater Conservancy was awarded a \$606,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to apply towards the purchase of the 423-acre property located in Musser Gap. ClearWater Conservancy is currently working with the landowner to continue to move the project forward. Fundraising for the acquisition of this land will begin in fall 2005. For more information about this project, go to www.clearwaterconservancy.org or contact Katie Ombalski at ClearWater Conservancy (814) 237-0400.

*-Katie Ombalski, Conservation Biologist
ClearWater Conservancy*

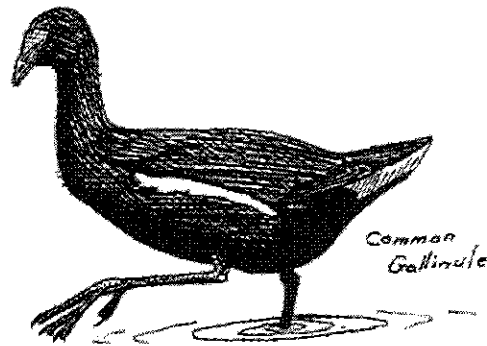
Editor's Note: *Katie will give a short presentation on the Musser Gap project during the business portion of September's JVAS program meeting. Our primary speaker will be Kim Van Fleet, who will discuss Important Bird Areas with emphasis on those in the Juniata Valley.*

Going In: Marshcrawling Revisited

By Heidi Boyle

A steady, soaking rain gave the marsh a mysterious green glow in the morning light. A light breeze stirred the box elders, red maples and sumacs just enough to send cold drips down my neck as I wound my way through the brush toward the edge of a pond. Bumblebees meditated motionless, upside-down on the tips of multiflora rose, waiting for the rain to cease. As I reached the water's edge, two moorhens rose up in a great, ungainly flapping, squawking motion and disappeared into the cattails; a great portent for a morning of marshcrawling.

On previous visits, I found much to my delight that each visit supplied innumerable discoveries. From the clarion calls of birds to the meek whisper of insect wings, the marsh didn't withhold secrets for very long, something new came to pass around every corner and under every leaf.



Common Moorhen by JVAS member
Dick Mock



Wood Ducks by John James Audubon

Standing in the dripping knotweed, I happened upon a medieval-looking insect stepping with great purpose along the knotweed blossoms. The dark gray Wheelbug (*Arilus cristatus*) seemed menacing with its heavy, cog-shaped thorax and armor plates, providing an unmistakable 'do not touch' appearance. Despite its deadly-looking proboscis, designed for piercing and draining its prey, it is beneficial insect, feeding on pest species. I had to admire such a fearsome presence, unhindered by the rain.

Continuing on, I ducked under the ragged brown skeletons of cowbane and watched bald-faced hornets seeking a meal among inconspicuous figwort flowers. Turning toward the trees, I stopped abruptly, my nose two inches away from the intricate web of a female Spined Micrathena (*Micrathena gracilis*). This small beautiful spider sports a thick black and white abdomen edged with ten stubby spines, good defense against becoming a meal. Micrathenas are common in late summer, building webs 3 - 7' high, ironically placing the central disk at face level. Females build these fantastic webs fresh every morning, and every evening eat the web as a bedtime snack. This particular specimen was still building, angling carefully around and around, spinning its daytime dining perch.

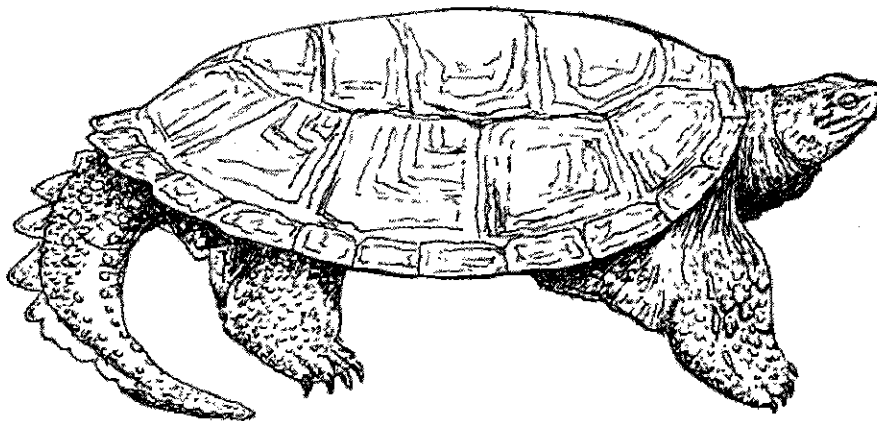
Backing carefully away from the web, under the tangle of cowbane and knotweed, I began following the pond edge, walking under the red leaves of sumac. The increasing beat of rain didn't seem to put a damper on the bird life cruising around the ponds. I saw many wood ducks, a scold of noisy bluejays, bedraggled goldfinches, young green herons, innumerable waxwings and barn swallows, a murder of crows and a few damp hummingbirds, one determinedly chasing a moth along the edge of the cattails.

As I watched the hummingbird, I paused with my binoculars in mid-air, with a feeling of being watched. I turned and beheld a pair of primitive, dark green eyes peering out of the weeds. I had interrupted a snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) as it was lumbering along the trail, its 12" long carapace covered in duckweed. I slowly lowered myself and sat in the sopping wet grass, waiting to see what the monster would do. It slowly lowered itself in the sopping wet grass, waiting to see what I would do. For ten or more minutes we watched each other, the numerous folds and wrinkles of its dark greenish-brown skin moving ever so slightly as it breathed or raised its head. Its short, stubby legs, and large hind feet with long digging claws revealed a muscular energy. Snappers have a sharp, horny beak and patient ways, using a 'sit and wait' method of letting dinner deliver itself into its powerful jaws. As we sat watching each other, the beast's tiny eyes, rimmed with yellow splotches, never wavered. Finally, I broke the stalemate, surrendering its territory and backed away.

After spending several hours among the ponds observing birds, insects, muskrats and plants of all kinds, I began trekking out. I was totally soaked and chilled, but felt only excitement at having encountered the incredible diversity of the marsh. The rainy day revealed more life than I had expected. As I rounded the edge of the last pond, I glanced into the cattails and stopped as I caught a slight movement in the shadows of the cattails. I was stunned as my binocs revealed the last sighting of the day: a female Virginia rail (*Rallus limicola*) in full sight, followed by a juvenile, mimicking every move she made. For a full five minutes, I watched the two stepping through the downed cattails, probing for small nibbles in the mud. And for a few seconds, my heart nearly stopped as a Sora rail (*Porzana carolina*) tiptoed out, nervously skirted the pair of Virginias, and ducked out of sight. What an amazing day.

*"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown,
for going out, I found, was really going in."*

--John Muir



Snapping Turtle by JVAS President Dr. Stan Kotala

Anti-conservation Congressman takes aim at Endangered Species

For thirty years, the Endangered Species Act has been a safety net for our nation's species on the brink of extinction. Because of its protections, majestic bald eagles still soar over our mountains, wild salmon still return to our rivers, wolves once again roam in Yellowstone and humpback whales travel our coasts. In addition, the law also protects the ecosystems which endangered species depend upon, which provides important safeguards to America's mountains, forests, and rivers.

But today, America's natural heritage is threatened by politicians and special interests in Washington D.C. that seek to eliminate the checks and balances that the Endangered Species Act provides. House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA), a self-proclaimed opponent of conservationists, is leading the charge, and has announced plans to introduce legislation that would aggressively strip the Endangered Species Act of its strongest protections. A copy of Pombo's bill, the "**Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005**," was leaked to the media and conservation organizations in July.

Despite its cynical title, it is an anti-recovery bill. Representative Pombo's Extinction bill would gut the Endangered Species Act on behalf of developers, oil companies, timber companies, mining companies and extreme property rights groups. According to reports, the draft bill would:

- Completely repeal the Endangered Species Act in 2015
- Eliminate the requirement to recover endangered species
- Reduce protection of threatened species
- Eliminate protection of critical habitat areas
- Politicize and eliminate scientific decision-making
- Eliminate independent federal oversight
- Bury federal biologists under mountains of useless paperwork
- Bankrupt the federal agencies by diverting conservation funds to pay landowners and corporation to obey the law

The Endangered Species Act is a safety net that works to protect species on the brink of extinction. Rep. Pombo's bill would cut large holes in this safety net, with dire consequences for America's natural heritage.

Originally, Rep. Pombo said he wanted to introduce and vote on the bill before Congress recessed for the month of August. Because of criticism in the media and from conservation and scientific associations, he has distanced himself from the bill. His staff has said it is an old draft and the bill's provisions have changed drastically. While the provisions of the bill may change by the time it is introduced, the draft shows that the real purpose of this bill is to weaken the Endangered Species Act.

The Endangered Species Act is a landmark law that prompts us to be caretakers of Creation; good stewards of our land and the web of life it supports. It has been enormously successful in preventing the extinction of hundreds of species, including bald eagles, humpback whales, wolves and salmon. We must not diminish protections for these magnificent animals, or for the places they call home.

In the coming months, Congress will likely vote on Rep. Pombo's plan to gut the Endangered Species Act. It is critical that members of Congress stand up for America's natural heritage and oppose his scheme to repeal the protections that the Endangered Species Act provides. ***Please call your Congressman and ask him or her to support the Endangered Species Act and oppose any bill that would weaken protections for species and habitat!***

JOIN JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON!

Juniata Valley Audubon membership provides you with the following benefits:

- Notification of Juniata Valley Audubon's exciting activities including nature programs, field trips and other events
- Subscription to the bimonthly chapter newsletter, *The Gnatcatcher*
- Opportunities to participate in conservation projects and environmental advocacy, and have fun!

Become a chapter-only member: _____ Individual: \$15 _____ Family: \$20 _____ Supporting: \$35

_____ Friend of JVAS: \$50 _____ Corporate: \$100

_____ Life Membership: \$500— JVAS Life Membership provides you with all the benefits listed above for a once-in-a-lifetime fee of \$500.

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SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER PROGRAMS

September 20, 2005

"Raptor Identification and Conservation in Important Bird Areas (IBAs)"- Join Kim Van Fleet, director of Audubon PA's pioneering IBA programs as she explores the links between raptor migration and conservation. Special guest Katie Ombalski from the Clearwater Conservancy will open with a brief presentation on a new addition to Rothrock State Forest and Tussey Ridge IBA.

October 18, 2005

"Ginseng in Pennsylvania"- Join Penn State forestry student Eric Burkhardt to learn about the natural history, human history, and conservation of one of the Appalachians' most distinctive perennial wildflowers.

ABOUT JVAS PROGRAMS: Programs are presented on the third Tuesday of each month. They begin at 7 PM in the chapel at Alto-Reste Park on Plank Road, Altoona. Our programs are designed for a general audience, and are free and open to the public.

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER FIELD TRIPS

September 24, 2005

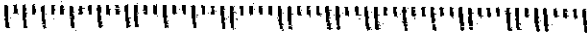
Allegheny Front Hawkwatch- We will visit this local Bedford/Somerset County birding "hotspot" in search of raptors as they glide past in migration with the majestic Shawnee Valley as a backdrop. Meet at Unkel Joe's Woodshed in Altoona at 9 AM. Bring binoculars, bag lunch, and a cushion.

October 22, 2005

King's Gap Environmental Center- Exploring the footpaths of this 1454 acre historic area that straddles South Mountain in Cumberland County, we hope to encounter all the flora and fauna that a mature oak forest can offer. Meet at McDonald's in Huntingdon at 9 AM. Bring comfortable walking shoes and a bag lunch.

JVAS Juniata Club River Trips take place according to weather and water levels. If you would like your name added to the Juniata Club roster, contact Helena Kotala at ccwiba@keyconn.net or 946-8840. She will notify you of upcoming trips by email or phone.

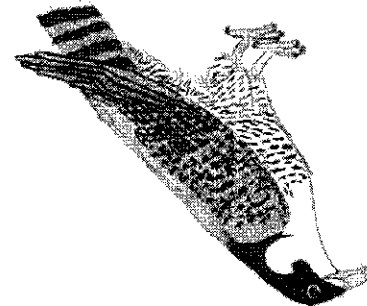
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by JVAS member Emily Majcher

Peregrine Falcon



Marcela Bonta
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