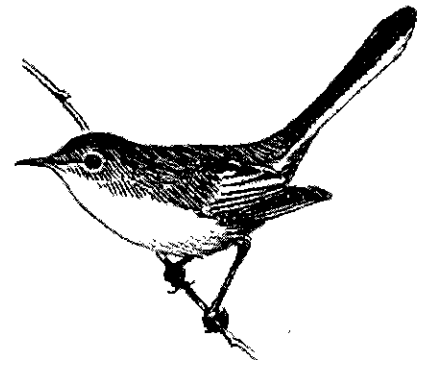


THE GNATCATCHER

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

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JVAS Conservation Committee Member receives 2007 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award

Donates \$5,000 prize to Juniata Valley Audubon



*JVAS Conservation Committee member
Laura Jackson*

The 2007 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards recognize programs focusing on environmental improvements in western Pennsylvania. Mr. Kerry Barefoot, principal of Bedford High School, nominated Laura Jackson for the Primary/Secondary Education Award, which she received on June 7, 2007 for her work with high school environmental science and Envirothon students during the 2006 school year.

She developed activities to help students understand the importance of a healthy watershed, the impact that farming has on water quality, and how local farmers use best management practices to improve stream quality. Students studied the Evitts Creek and Cove Creek watersheds, toured 6 farms, examined nutrient management programs and observed no-till practices. Experts from the Bedford County Conservation District assisted with the program by explaining the operations and how farmers can complete cost-share programs to clean up nutrient pollution sites.

Students also conducted stream studies to determine how best management practices enhanced water quality. These projects culminated a series of programs where students studied freshwater mussel populations in the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River and planted trees in riparian buffer areas. Students also share their watershed knowledge with Bedford Elementary students during the 4th grade Environmental Field Day held at the Bedford Elementary's Environmental Center each spring.

Through these real-world demonstrations of ecological concepts, Laura heightened environmental awareness and stewardship throughout Bedford Area School District. She was honored with a donation of \$5,000 made on her behalf to a local nonprofit environmental organization of her choice: The Juniata Valley Audubon Society in Altoona, Pennsylvania.

Explore an Appalachian River in the Little Juniata Natural Area

by JVAS President Dr. Stan Kotala

Unique geological features combine with distant and modern history to make the Little Juniata Natural Area a favorite hike for all seasons. This Rothrock State Forest Natural Area consists of 624 acres of Appalachian forest bordering the Little Juniata River water gap through Tussey Mountain in Huntingdon County. Water gaps without highways running through them are rare in Pennsylvania, so enjoy your experience in this unique setting freed from the drone of trucks and cars.

After parking in the gravel parking lot set between the mountain and the river, the riverside trail, which you'll be hiking, follows the Little Juniata River upstream for about a mile and a half. The trail is flat, so walking is easy and enjoyable. The orange-blazed Mid State Trail also crosses this parking lot, but we'll be staying on the riverside trail for this hike.

There are several interesting geologic features in this area, including an exposure of Tuscarora sandstone, one of the most prominent mountain-building formations in Pennsylvania, and a horizontal thrust fault along the railroad cut. The Little Juniata Natural Area occupies a water gap that was formed as the ancient Little Juniata River carved down through a rising Tussey Mountain 300 million years ago. Across from the parking lot, on the south side of the river, a horizontal thrust fault is exposed 20 feet above the floor of the railroad cut. A fault occurs when the rock layer fractures, and there is movement between the separate parts. The Spruce Creek Gap fault is distinguishable where a greenish or reddish Rose Hill shale contrasts with a gray or white Tuscarora sandstone.

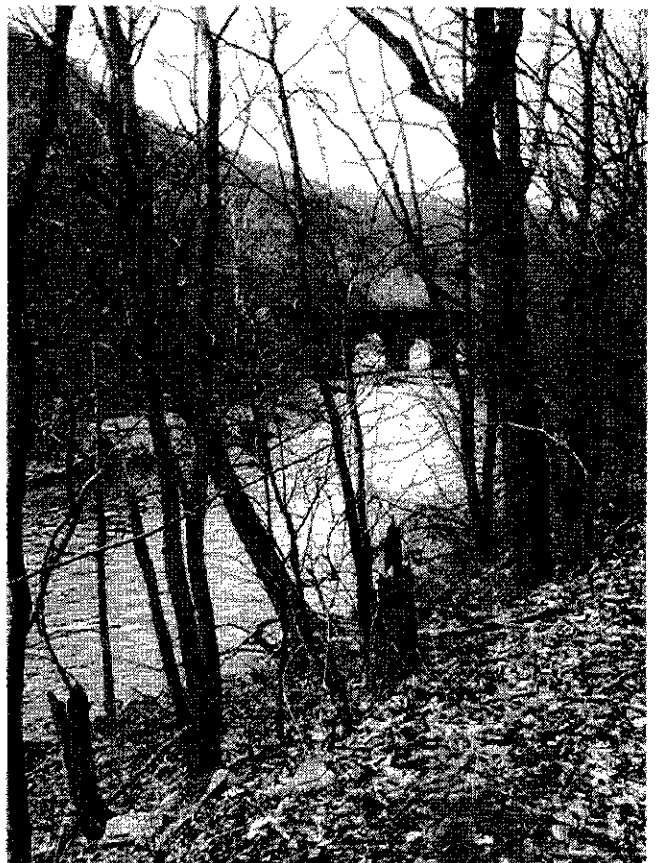
Steep slopes on either side of the river make a rapid transition from characteristic riverside plants to mountain trees. As you walk along the trail, the peaceful sound of rushing water is interrupted only by the occasional hum of a passing train. Sassafras and greenbrier are abundant near the river. Both species provide berries enjoyed by songbirds. Sassafras roots are used by people as a spice or to make tea. Wood asters, violets, jack-in-the pulpit, starry campion, columbine, joe pye weed, cardinal flower, Pennsylvania snakeroot, tall bellflower and several species of goldenrods can be found near the river along the trail.

To the left of the trail many small paths have been worn down to the river. Take the opportunity to visit the river's edge and you may glimpse some riverine wildlife. Belted kingfishers fly above the water surface in search of food, their loud rattling call echoing above the sound of rushing water. The kingfisher feeds on small fish and occasionally can be seen hovering above the surface before plunging into the water to catch its prey. They nest in holes that they dig in the riverbank. Great blue herons and green herons frequently may be seen feeding in the shallow

water along the river's edge. Many species of ducks, such as mallards, wood ducks, common mergansers, and hooded mergansers, can be seen on the water. In the summer, wood ducks nest in the holes of large trees, especially sycamores, and raise their young along the stream. The ducklings' first step out of the nest may be a 30 foot drop to the water!

To the right of the trail you'll see evidence of the quarries where Tuscarora quartzite was mined till the 1950s. The quartzite was used to make ganister bricks to line steel and copper furnaces. In some places, funicular routes used by the miners to lower the rocks are still visible. Black birch and moosewood rapidly are covering the traces of this industrial past.

Continuing down the trail, you will see box elder trees growing on the side toward the river. Box elder, a member of the maple family, has 3-7 leaflets per leaf and prefers wet areas. Blackberries line the trail along with pokeberry, a tall plant that produces dark-red to purple berries in late summer and early fall. Although poke berries are not edible, they have been used historically as a natural dye and to make ink.

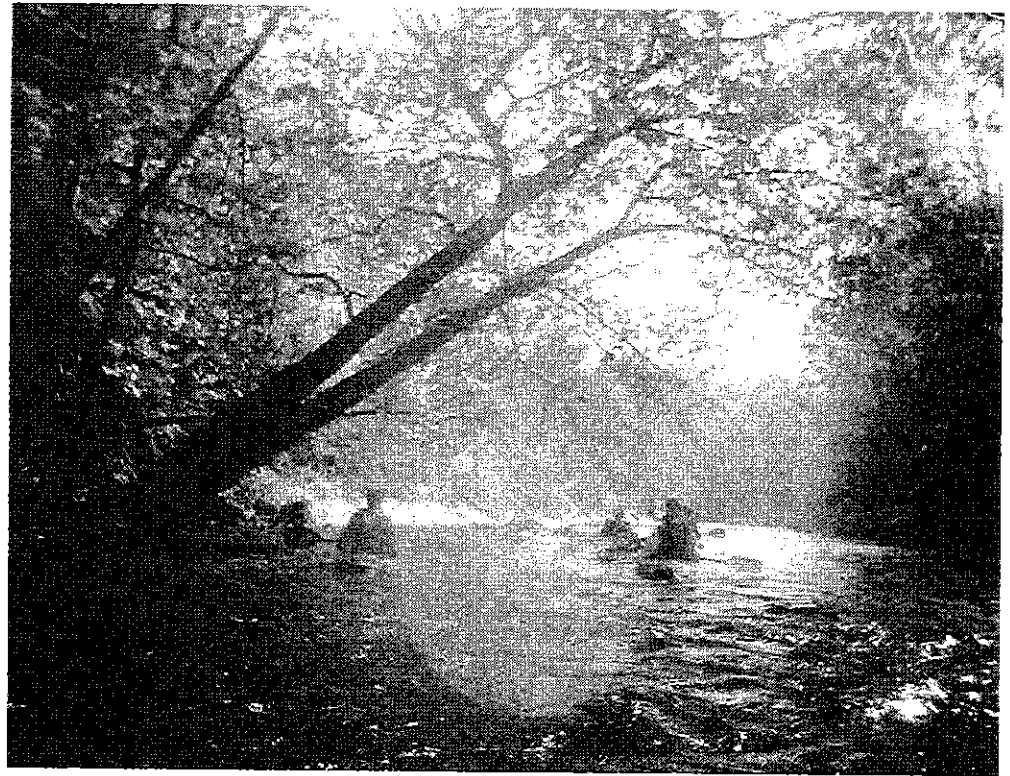


***Kayakers on a JVAS
Juniata Club river trip
enjoy the
Little Juniata River.***

Photos by Helena Kotala,
Nature's Images

***The river is by far
the most attractive
highway.***

H. D. Thoreau



Soon you'll come to a stone-arch railroad bridge that carries the trains to your side of the stream. The trail climbs a small hill and then you'll see another stone-arch bridge carrying the rails back to the south side of the river to enter the Barree Tunnel. This tunnel was the assigned target for a group of German commandos who landed from a U-boat near Cape May, New Jersey in World War II. The saboteurs, however, decided that they'd rather stay in the US, so they just turned themselves in when they got to Philadelphia. I guess that New Jersey made a really good impression on them.

Across the river from the tunnel, the trail drops down to the level of the stream and leaves even the railroad behind. As you walk along the trail, watch carefully for snakes. The Little Juniata Natural Area, like other state forest Natural Areas, has been designated as a special protection area for reptiles and amphibians. Northern water snakes, black snakes, copperheads, and timber rattlesnakes are found along the trail and the steep rocky slopes of the water gap. If you encounter a copperhead or timber rattlesnake, do not panic, simply walk around it. They'll often use their camouflage to avoid a direct encounter with people. Seeing one of these snakes is a rare treat!

As you continue your walk along the river, you'll notice more and more eastern hemlocks, particularly young ones, and large rocky outcrops closing in above the trail creating a cool moist microclimate. Soon you will see a small wooded island in the river where cardinal flower and joe pye weed bloom in summer. This rocky section of the river side trail leads to a large hemlock grove.

The trail is not marked clearly in this area but, if you follow along the river, then the trail will again become evident. In the

hemlocks, gray and red squirrels chatter and swing about. In the evenings, you may encounter a barred owl here, calling "who cooks for you, who cooks for YOU all."

The upstream border of the hemlock grove marks the end of the trail. Private property lies upstream, so turn around or stop and enjoy a picnic among the hemlocks. Retrace your steps back to the parking lot, savoring the rich sights, sounds, and smells of this river. The riverside trail is a delight at any time of year, but summer's my favorite because the Little Juniata Natural Area provides a cool haven on even the hottest days.

Hike distance: 3 miles

USGS Topographical map: Alexandria

Directions: From Route 22 at Alexandria, Huntingdon County, take route 305 to Main Street, where you'll turn left. Follow Main Street and turn right just beyond the Juniata Valley Medical Center and before the Mead Products factory. Follow this road through Barree, crossing the bridge over the Little Juniata River and make the first left onto Mountain Road. Follow Mountain Road for 0.6 mile to its end, a gravel parking lot in the Little Juniata Natural Area.

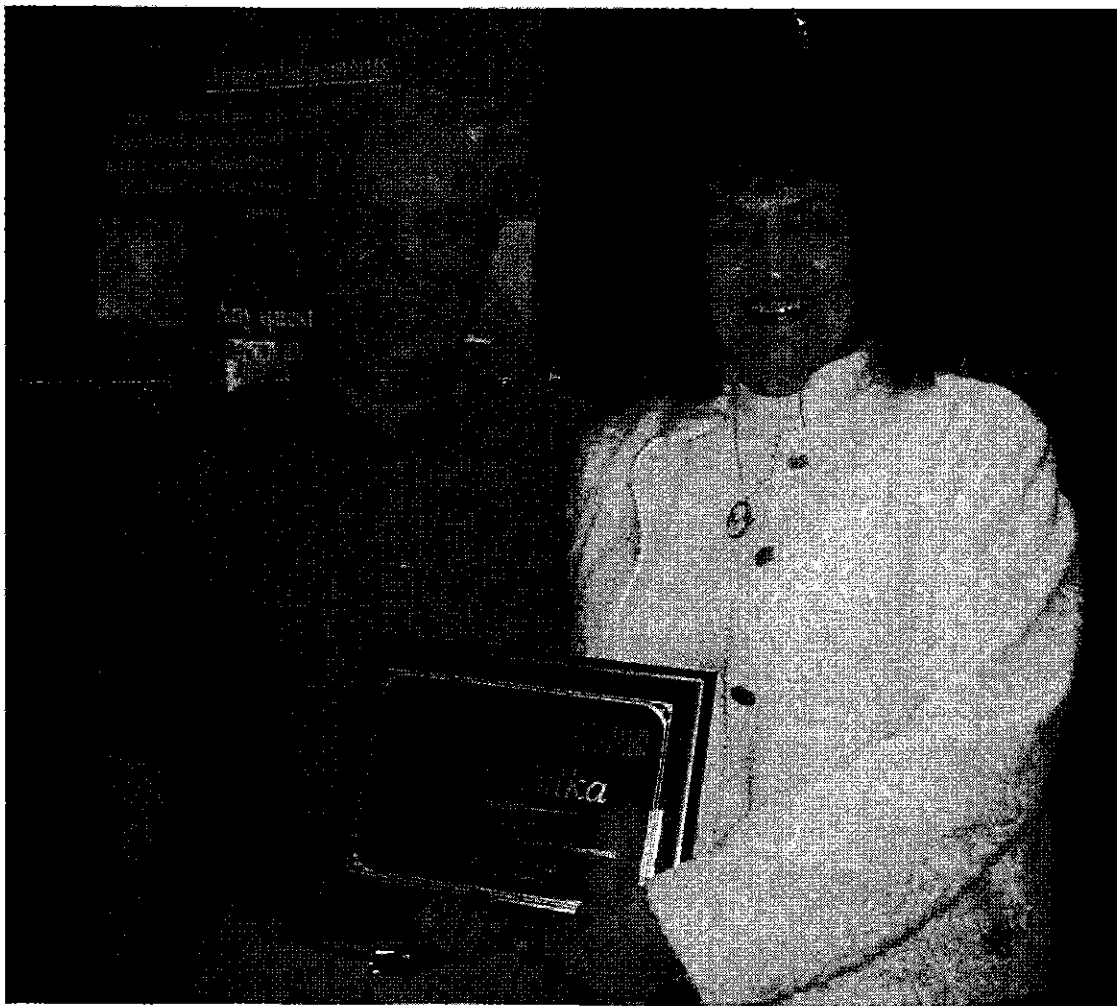
***JVAS President Dr. Stan Kotala will
lead a Little Juniata Natural Area
Riverside Trail hike on Sunday, July
15, from 3-5pm. Meet at the Little
Juniata Natural Area parking lot.***

HAZEL BILKA

Receives 2007 JVAS Conservation Award

In 1992 a feasibility study was completed about converting the abandoned Bell's Gap Railroad and the Logan Valley Electric Trolley Line to rail trails for non-motorized use - bikers, hikers, bird watchers, cross country skiers, etc. Obstacles that need to be overcome to get a trail constructed involve community support, property owner rights, and local government support with lots of meetings, fund raisers, and hours writing grants.

In October 2003, the Bellwood Trail Group joined Rails to Trails of Central PA (RTTCPA) and Hazel became a member of the trail Board in January 2004. When the RTTCPA board was not willing to administer a DCNR design and development grant, Hazel took it upon herself to convince the Bellwood Antis Trust Fund to sponsor the grant. And since, they have received a second construction grant. The completed 1.2 mile Bell's Gap Trail has been officially opened since July 8th. This is only the beginning with future plans to connect to the City of Altoona, the Village of Tipton, and Bland's Mountain.



The 2007 JVAS CONSERVATION AWARD was given to HAZEL BILKA at the Spring Banquet. The inscription reads 2007 Juniata Valley Audubon Conservation Award presented to Hazel Bilka, April 24, 2007 for spearheading the planning and development of the Bell's Gap Rail Trail in the Bellwood area. JVAS Historian Terry Wentz on left.

Cold Light Magic

By Heidi Boyle

Porch sitting is a great technique to fully enjoy the magic of summer night in Pennsylvania.

After dinner, when the glare and blare of the day is fading to a dreamy mélange of salmon, powder blue and plum, comes the gloaming. It is a mirror of that time between wakefulness and dreaming when the world is a magical place.

The sharp details of daylight soften and the fields and woods turn to a tapestry in velvet. Fields of leafy shrubs and waving grasses soften and become an ocean of subtlety changing hues. Rich waves of malachite and sapphire surge over each other and blend with ever increasing pulses of pearly gray.

As the last streaks of orange and pink leave the sky, the cadence changes and the undulation of color stills. Suddenly, the dream is punctuated by a flash of gold - and another...and another. As the waves of color fade quietly to deep shades of evening, cool flashes of light pulse across open fields. The rich tapestry now sparkles and comes alive with a dance of light and love.

Fireflies, with the simple blink of light, come out of hiding to call each other with their eyes. Flashes of light are a dance on the wing as males leave patterns of light trails and wait for the females to flash their acceptance.

The aptly named Lampyridae are soft-bodied beetles that have captured their place in fanciful tales and stories as the magic keepers of the light on summer nights. There are over 200 species of lightning bugs, or fireflies in the United States, and thousands of species in the tropics. Each species has its own light color, flash and pattern in order to communicate with those of its own species.

The light produced is "cold light" because it produces almost no heat. Fireflies produce light by using oxygen, breathed in through the abdominal spiracles, which combines with a substance called luciferin in the presence of the enzyme luciferase, in special cells called photocytes.

From my lofty vantage point high on the deck, I could see several species, all flashing their signal lanterns in their secret code. Males swirled thickly over the field, flashing and dancing, while the females perched on leaves and stems, eyes toward the sky with hopes of love.

Females rarely fly, and spend much of their lives hidden away. Fireflies are carnivorous, feeding on other insects, snails, and slugs. Despite their popular names, fireflies or lightning bugs are not flies or bugs - they are beetles with hard elytra, or outer wings, which cover a pair of clear, membranous inner wings.

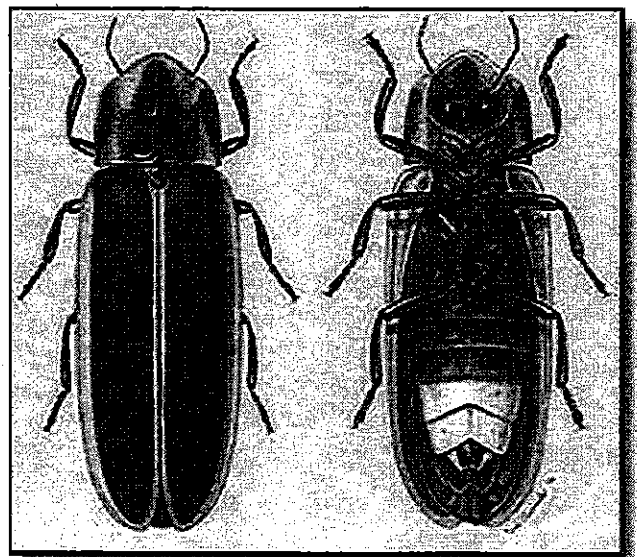
Several times, while sitting quietly, a firefly landed on my leg or shoe and I was able to take a close look at this miniature predator. Scarcely a half inch long, the beautiful firefly is a study in black, gold and red. The head of the firefly is tucked under, providing protection as well as a better position for feeding on its prey with its chewing mouthparts.

After mating, female fireflies crawl down to lay their eggs in the soil. After three to four weeks, the eggs hatch into larvae, also carnivorous. The larvae sometimes glow also, and are commonly known as "glowworms," as are wingless adult females of certain Lampyridae. A night hike through the woods and fields can reveal the forest floor alive with glowing larvae of fireflies, the cold light pulsing as it does in the adults.

Lampyridae larvae spend the summer eating small arthropods, then will dig small tunnels in which to overwinter. As soil temperatures increase, the larvae will emerge again to eat and pupate, finally becoming the adults that so mesmerize us on summer evenings.

Quietly sitting overlooking the field and darkened woods beyond, I counted over five hundred swirling lights before giving up. Who knew how many fireflies were pulsing and flashing in the darkening fields, looking for a mate.

The lights throbbing in the twilight were a beautiful reminder of the efficiency of nature and the wonder of evolution. Selection and survival over the millennia had served to produce this phenomenon of cold light, something that humans have struggled to replicate but without success. The little lanterns flashing to their desired mates in the fields below were but a step in the continuing changes that have crafted the species on this planet for millennia, and they were a beautiful and peaceful part of porch sitting on a Pennsylvania night.



Create a "Monarch Waystation" to help our Butterfly Friends!

What IS a Monarch Waystation?

A "waystation" may be defined as an intermediate station between principal stations on a line of travel. If we imagine the principal stations for monarchs to be the overwintering sites in Mexico and the points of reproduction in the breeding season, then it becomes easy for us to visualize the value of resource-rich waystations along the monarch's route through its annual fall and spring migrations. Without resources - in the form of nectar from flowers - fall migratory butterflies would be unable to make the journey to Mexico. Similarly, without milkweeds along the entire route north in the spring and summer months, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall.

Monarch Resources are Declining

Milkweeds and nectar sources are declining due to development and the widespread use of herbicides in croplands, pastures and roadsides. Because 90% of all milkweed/monarch habitats occur within the agricultural landscape, farm practices have the potential to strongly influence monarch populations. Why we are concerned:

Farm and ranch land is disappearing at rate of nearly 3,000 acres per day. In a 5-year period starting in 1992, 6 million acres of farmland (an area the size of the state of Maryland) were converted to subdivisions, factories, and other developments (www.farmland.org).

Widespread adoption of herbicide-resistant corn and soybeans in the last 5 years has resulted in the loss of at least 80 million acres of monarch habitat.

Use of herbicides along roadsides continues to reduce milkweeds and nectar plants.

Development

We are all familiar with development in and around our cities - farm and ranch land is being converted to houses, factories, shopping centers and parking lots. It is the scale of these changes that is alarming - 3,000 acres a day adds up quickly! The rate of change was greater in the 1990s than in the 1980s and it is probably even greater today. Urban sprawl, especially in the eastern half of the country, is eliminating habitats for monarchs and displacing wildlife.

Genetically Modified (GM) Crops

The planting of crops genetically modified to resist the herbicide glyphosphate (most commonly known by the brand name Roundup®) allows growers to spray fields of young soybeans or corn with this herbicide instead of tilling to control weeds. Milkweeds survive tilling but not the repeated use of glyphosphate. In fact, before the adoption of these GM crops, surveys in several states revealed that croplands with modest numbers of milkweeds produced more monarchs per unit area than other monarch habitats. The loss of milkweeds in these row crops is significant, considering that these croplands represent more than 30% of the total summer breeding area for monarchs.

Roadside Management

The use of herbicides and frequent mowing along roadsides has converted much of this habitat to grasslands - a habitat generally lacking in food and shelter for wildlife. These habitats constitute 2-4% of the land area throughout the monarch's summer breeding range. Although some states have started to increase the diversity of plantings along roadsides, including milkweeds, these programs are small.

Unfortunately, the remaining milkweed habitats - pastures, hayfields, edges of forests, grasslands, native prairies, and urban areas - are not sufficient to sustain the large monarch populations seen in the 1990s. **Monarchs need our help.**

What We Can Do

To offset the loss of milkweeds and nectar sources due to development, use of herbicides, and roadside management practices, we need to create, conserve, and protect milkweed/monarch habitats. Monarchs need resource patches - lots of them - and **our goal over the next three years is the creation of at least 10,000 of these patches**, which we are calling "**Monarch Waystations**". We need you to help us and help monarchs by creating Monarch Waystations in home gardens, schools, parks, zoos, nature centers, field margins, along roadsides, and on other unused plots of land. This effort won't replace the amount of milkweed that has been lost or even keep pace with the habitat losses each year; however, without a major effort to restore milkweeds to as many locations as possible, the monarch population is certain to decline to extremely low levels.

MONARCH WAYSTATION



This site provides milkweeds, nectar sources, and shelter needed to sustain monarch butterflies as they migrate through North America.

Certified and registered by Monarch Watch as an official Monarch Waystation.

CREATE, CONSERVE, & PROTECT MONARCH HABITATS

WWW.MONARCHWATCH.ORG

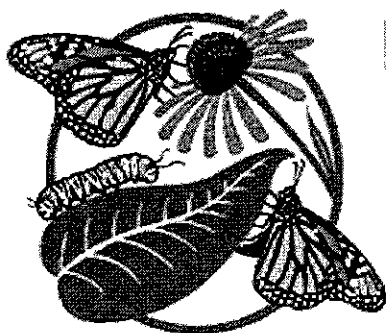
Monarch Watch • University of Kansas • Entomology Program • 1200 Southwest Ave • Lawrence, KS 66044-2198

In addition to creating monarch habitats in those areas each of us controls, we need to lobby on behalf of monarchs - to persuade our schools, nature centers, municipalities, and departments of transportation (DOTs) in each state to also create these habitats. Creation of restored habitats that support monarchs and other wildlife will save money at all levels of government charged with maintaining roadsides and public lands. The increasing cost of energy is putting a strain on all budgets. We need to encourage our officials to create habitats and save money by eliminating unnecessary mowing and use of herbicides.

The Value of Monarch Waystations

By creating and maintaining a Monarch Waystation you are contributing to monarch conservation and are helping to assure the continuation of the monarch migration in North America. Your efforts will also provide habitats for other species, including many pollinators - a rapidly declining and underappreciated, yet important, group of species. By educating others about monarchs and the need to provide habitats for wildlife you will help raise the public's awareness of important conservation issues.

<http://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/>



Monarchs Need Our Help!

Get involved in monarch conservation by creating a Monarch Waystation.

Brush Mountain, Wetlands, and Little Juniata River threatened by proposed Massive Mountainside Housing Development

Juniata Valley Audubon is alarmed by the proposed housing development known as the "Kettle Creek Planned Residential Development". The location of the proposed building site is in Logan Township, Blair County between Carlisle Lane and Kettle Road just east of I-99 on the western slope of Brush Mountain. Construction of this 500-unit development on 270 acres of steep mountainside will necessitate the crossing of Kettle Creek (to meet Logan Township requirements for 2 access roads) as well as the crossing 5 first-order tributaries of Sandy Run, which flows into the Little Juniata River, a world-renowned trout stream, as well as crossing and/or filling in wetlands associated with these streams.

Kettle Creek, also a tributary of the Little Juniata River, was surveyed in fall of 2006 ago by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and was found to have an excellent population of wild brook trout in the project area (160 brook trout of all age classes were found in ~1/8 mile of Kettle Creek). Also, during this same survey, a DEP biologist collected a number of macroinvertebrates that are indicative of very high water quality (meriting HQ or EV status). Likewise, Sandy Run was recently surveyed by the PFBC and found to contain naturally recruited wild brown trout. These tributaries emanating from Brush Mountain provide high quality water to the upper Little Juniata River and provide spawning habitat for both brown and brook trout. **Due to the presence of the wild trout populations, any wetlands adjacent to these waterways are automatically designated "Exceptional Value (EV)" by the DEP and should therefore be afforded maximum protection.**

This development proposes extremely dense housing on the steep western slope of Brush Mountain. Preliminary plans show large amounts of impervious surface such as rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, and asphalt roads covering the 270-acre site, which currently is covered by mature deciduous forest. Throughout this forest are many spring seeps, 1st order streams, and small wetlands. Replacement of this steep mountainside forest habitat with dense residential development will result in a huge increase in stormwater runoff, increased water temperature, increased chemical and particulate pollution of streams feeding the Little Juniata River, as well as a loss of habitat for native wildlife, including brook trout.

Because of the potential for impacts by this development to the resources described above, Juniata Valley Audubon asks that the DEP require an **Individual NPDES permit** for this project and that a **public hearing** be made part of the permit requirement.

Please write a letter to the DEP requesting that the DEP require both an Individual NPDES Permit and a public hearing regarding the Kettle Creek Planned Residential Development in Logan Township, Blair County.

Send your letter to

Mr. Ramez Ziadeh, P.E.
Chief, Permitting and Technical Services Section
Watershed Management Program
PA DEP Southcentral Regional Office
909 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 177110-8200

JVAS Golden-winged Warbler Monitoring at SGL 322 begins its Second Season

At the request of Pennsylvania Game Commission biologist Justin Vreeland, the JVAS is monitoring golden-winged warblers and other early successional species in State Game Lands 322, the Suppes Tract, between Huntingdon and Petersburg. Utilizing protocols developed for Cornell University's Golden-winged Warbler Atlas Project, JVAS members Maxine Leckvarcik, Alice Fleischer, Marcia Bonta, Shirley Wagoner, and Alice, Helena, and Stan Kotala have been arriving at the site at 7am once a week for the past month to conduct 3 minute point counts. In addition to golden-winged warblers, the JVAS team has seen yellow-breasted chats, prairie warblers, chestnut-sided warblers, and field sparrows along the assigned route.

The golden-winged warbler is a species of special concern in Pennsylvania because the early successional habitat that it depends on is disappearing as fallow lands and farms are converted into housing developments, business parks, and shopping centers.



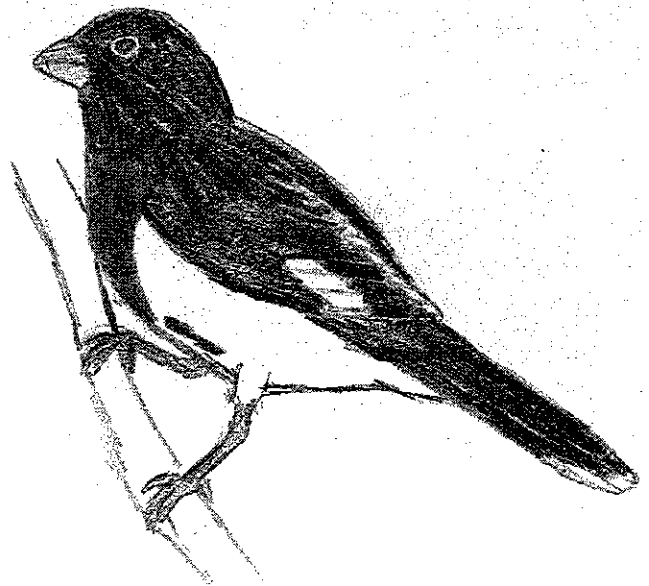
JVAS President Dr. Stan Kotala, Helena Kotala, and Maxine Leckvarcik survey SGL 322 for golden-winged warblers.

Preserve Forests to stop Global Warming

Two of Earth's most serious environmental problems, global warming and the extinction crisis, have a common solution: stopping the loss of Earth's forests and other natural carbon fixing habitats. 20% of greenhouse gas emissions result from the deforestation of such areas.

The concept of "avoided deforestation" in which payments are provided to countries or projects that protect existing forest as opposed to reforestation projects, has been slow to take hold, but we urgently need to find a way to incorporate forest conservation into our global plans to slow climate change. Such forest protection projects could be financed by carbon taxes, a global trust fund, or by carbon credits purchased by polluters to offset emissions.

Conservation scientists have already generated data to help; prioritizing areas for action, for example, by using bird species with limited global ranges as indicators for areas that harbor unique biodiversity. Halting or slowing forest loss would be a valuable and convenient next step towards slowing global warming and saving Earth's species.



Rose-breasted Grosbeak

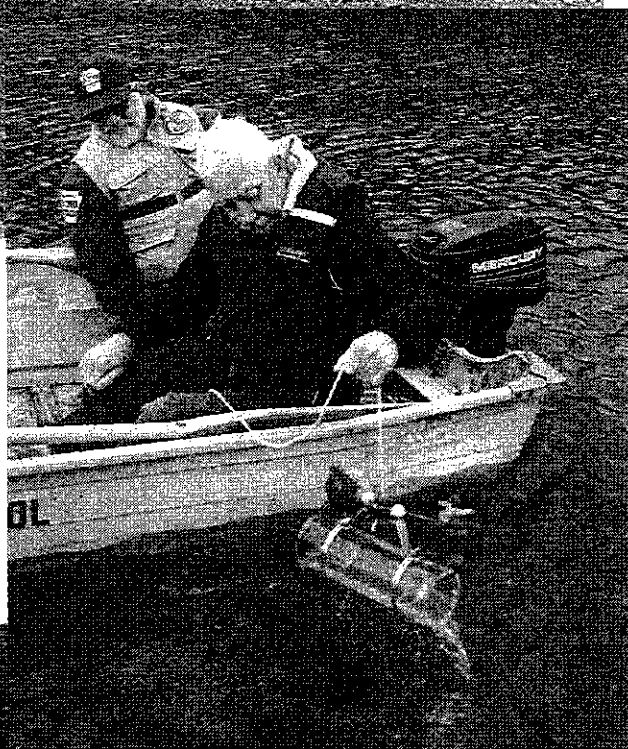
by JVAS Staff Artist Emily Majcher

JVAS Canoe Lake Monitoring Project Launched



Above: The JVAS Canoe Lake Monitoring Project team.

Right: JVAS member Tom Harvey obtains a lake-bottom water sample as Canoe Creek State Park Manager Steve Volstadt looks on..



JVAS Past President Charlie Hoyer enjoys riding the DCLR airboat on Canoe Lake.

JVAS members board the DCNR airboat.



Right: JVAS Gnatcatcher editor Helena Kotala uses a Secchi disc to check the turbidity of Canoe Lake.



Below: Laura Jackson (left) and JVAS Gnatcatcher editor Helena Kotala check the pH of the Canoe Lake surface water. Other values studied include dissolved oxygen, conductivity, temperature, turbidity.



DEP's Dana Walker demonstrates the van Dorn sampler, used to obtain water samples at various depths.

DCNR secretary seeks to convert State Forest Land into Industrial Windplants

On June 1, Michael DiBerardinis, secretary of Pennsylvania's DCNR, announced that agency's proposal to convert portions of our state forests into industrial windplants. The secretary in the past has written that 40,000 acres of state forest land would be suitable for industrial windplant development.

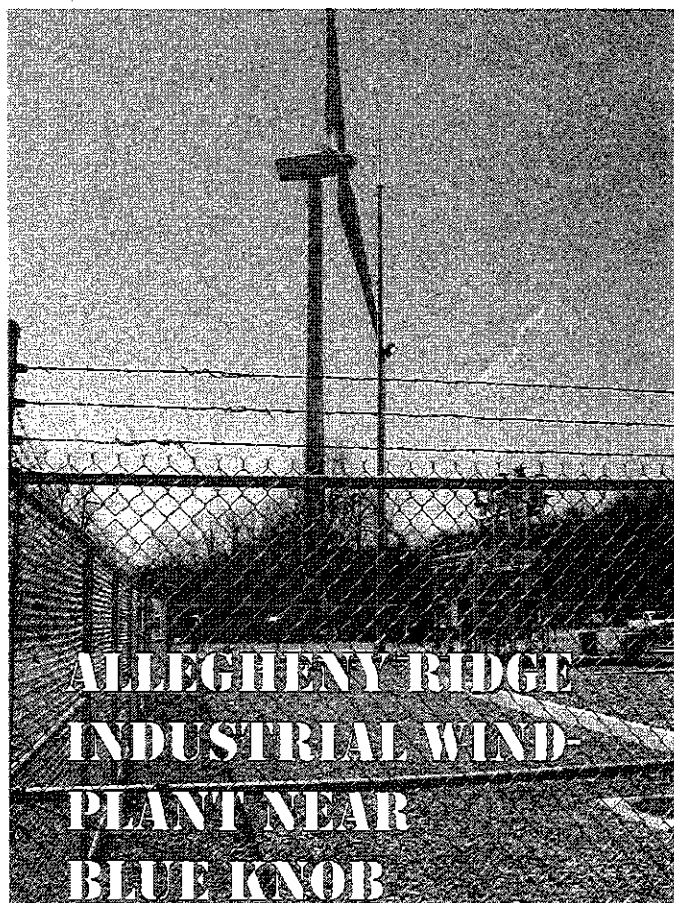
This announcement should alarm all users of our state forests. Because of the problems of severe habitat fragmentation, direct mortality to birds and bats, and the inducement of avoidance behavior, industrial windfarms are incompatible with the stewardship and conservation goals of these lands. Since more than 4000 industrial wind turbines would be required to meet just 10% of Pennsylvania's electricity demand, it should be obvious that the severe ecological costs of industrial windfarms on our public lands far outweigh their puny benefits.

JVAS urges its members to visit Gamesa's Allegheny Ridge Windfarm, which consists of 90 industrial-scale turbines covering 13 miles of formerly unfragmented forest between Route 22 and Blue Knob State Park near Altoona. Much of this area had been designated as a Landscape Conservation Area by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy because of its extensive forest and lack of infrastructure. The forest has been replaced with clearcuts and bulldozed areas of 1-3 acres around each turbine, roadcuts ranging from 50-100 feet wide, transmission line corridors 20-50 feet wide, and substations covering 3-5 acres. The forest has been devastated.

The Pennsylvania Biological Survey's Mammal Technical Committee released a statement last fall describing the effects of industrial windplants on Pennsylvania's wildlife as "severe." Hawk Mountain Sanctuary's Director of Conservation Science Dr. Keith Bildstein has called for a moratorium on industrial windplant construction at high risk sites. The Pennsylvania Game Commission has designated many of central Pennsylvania's ridges as a

high risk sites for industrial windplant development. Last month, a report by the National Academy of Science stated that industrial windplants pose a significant threat to bats and birds, especially in known migratory raptor flyways. The same National Academy of Science report condemned "the lack of any truly coordinated planning" in the rapid growth of windplants.

While supportive of wind energy in appropriate locations where it will not fragment large forested areas or endanger sensitive wildlife species or habitats, **Juniata Valley Audubon asks that sportsmen, hikers, birders, and all other outdoor enthusiasts please contact their local state representatives and senators to voice their alarm over this disturbing scheme to radically alter our State Forests.**



The Following Editorial by the Harrisburg Patriot News was published on June 5:

It would be an outrage to place turbines on state's public lands

Permitting the placement of windmills in state forests and parks would be an abomination — an outrage against the very concept of public lands set aside to permit the enjoyment of nature, preserve habitat for wild animals and plants, and protect watersheds.

And yet, there it was, being floated at the Penn Future Clean Energy Conference last week in East Pennsboro Twp. by none other than Michael DiBerardinis, state secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Declared the individual responsible for state parks and forests: "We can't have our cake and eat it, too. Siting wind turbines on public lands is an imperative, not an option."

DiBerardinis subsequently modified his statement, saying he didn't mean to imply that state parks were being considered for wind farms, just state forests. Which doesn't change a thing.

This is not the first time DiBerardinis has shown his disdain for what ought to be his No. 1 job: preserving what little is left of Penn's Woods in its purest state. It's bad enough that nature is under assault everywhere one turns. But to hear it promoted by the individual who should be the pre-eminent protector of nature in the state is abysmal.

We do not for a moment underestimate the challenge posed by global warming, or the huge impact it could have on this state, its forests, wildlife and, not least, economy. But we don't buy into the perverse notion that we must destroy nature in order to save it.

The wind-energy possibilities available on private land have barely been scratched, unless one also buys into the dubious view that windmills must be sited on mountaintops to achieve maximum efficiency.

A little inefficiency not only is in order, but should be mandatory. We cannot believe that, to make the most of wind energy, flat lands must be avoided.

Instead of the usual American response of building the biggest machine to produce the largest possible amount of energy, regardless of other circumstances, all sorts of wind possibilities should be explored, including micro-windmills and placing windmills in urban locations, as is taking hold in Europe.

So-called "clean energy" would be sullied by opening up public lands to windmills, solar collectors, transmission lines, nuclear power plants and other industrial fixtures, regardless of their alleged necessity or imperative. It boggles the mind how often the foxes guarding the hen house come up with an excuse to violate the very principles and resources they've been sworn to protect.

It is dismaying and disheartening to see Gov. Ed Rendell and crew entertaining such deplorable environmental policies. DiBerardinis would fit right in with the current Interior and Agriculture departments in Washington, where turning over the nation's public lands to the exploiters — rather than preserving them for future generations — is job No. 1.

REGISTER FOR JVAS e-NEWS!

JVAS members interested in receiving timely notice of events such as meetings, field trips, JVAS Juniata Club river trips, and local conservation issues should send their name and email address to JVAS E-NEWS editor Helena Kotala at ccwiba@keyconn.net to subscribe to our free news service.

Sign up for JVAS Juniata Club River trips!

JVAS' canoe and kayak group enjoyed many great river trips on the Little Juniata and Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River last year. These trips are done at a leisurely pace with wildlife and observation in mind. Trips last 1-4 hours and are on Class 1-3 water depending on river conditions. Notice of upcoming trips is done by phone or email to take advantage of optimal weather and river flow. If you'd like to be added to the JVAS Juniata Club roster, call or send an email to JVAS Juniata Club Leader Helena Kotala at 814- 946-8840 or ccwiba@keyconn.net

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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.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Mail this form to
Juniata Valley Audubon
c/o Dr. Alice Kotala
Membership Chair
RR 3 Box 866
McMullen Road
Altoona, PA 16601-9206

JVAS BOARD MEMBERS

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<charma77@verizon.net>

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<ccwiba@keyconn.net>

Programs.....Dave Bonta (see above)

Conservation Dr. Stan Kotala (see above)

Education..... VACANT

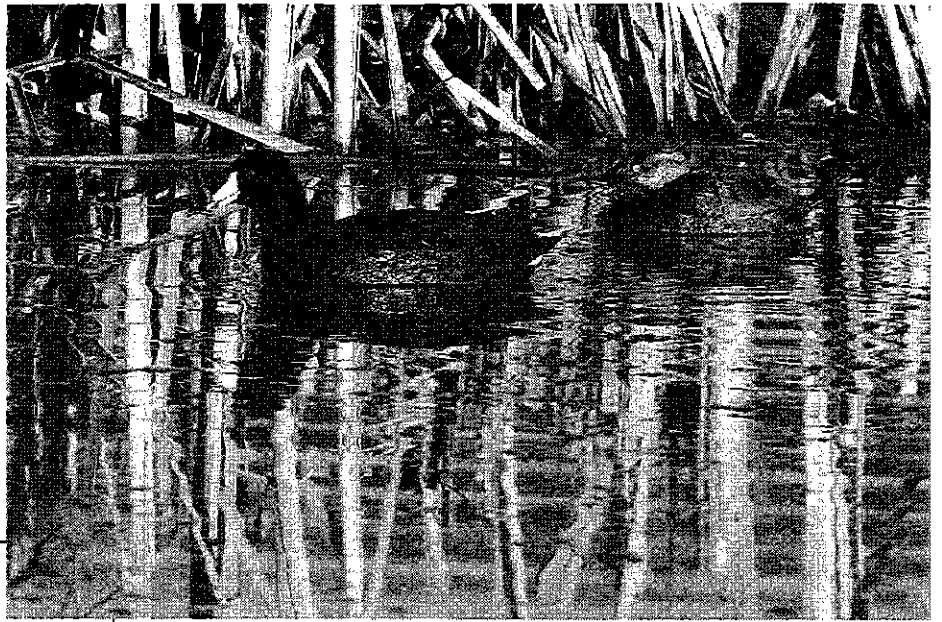
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IBA Coordinator.....Dr. Stan Kotala (see above)

CBC Coordinator.....Heidi Boyle 949-9302

<hboyle@state.pa.us>

NAMC Coordinator.....Dr. Stan Kotala (see above)



ABOUT JVAS PROGRAMS: Programs are presented on the *third Tuesday of each month, September through May*. 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.

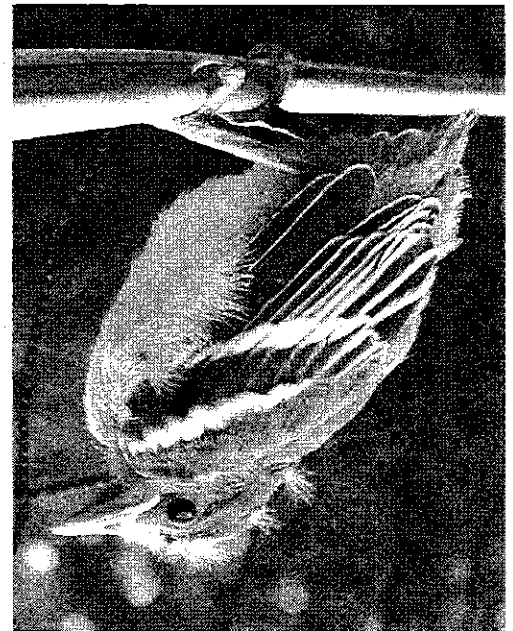
Left: Northern Red Salamander

Above: Coot and Ruddy Duck

Both photos by JVAS member Martin Oakley

Printed by Wick Copy Center

Fledgeling Baltimore oriole perched on
volley-ball net
by JVAS Gnatcatcher editor Helena Kotala



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