

The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

Vol. XLVII, No. 1 — January / February 2015

Published bimonthly (except for July and August)

as a benefit for members of the...

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



A Decade of Service...

Thank you, Stan Kotala, for serving as JVAS Conservation Chair for the last 10 years. We really appreciate all the time, energy, and hard work that you've contributed. Stan is the true Batman, working tirelessly to protect natural places and wildlife, such as bats, birds, and other beasts!

Here are some of the areas that Stan has protected from development:

- ✓ Heller Caves
- ✓ Fort Roberdeau
- ✓ Brush Mountain, Canoe Mountain, Lock Mountain
- ✓ Petersburg Cliffs Biological Diversity Area
- ✓ Canoe Creek State Park



Stan is "flying down" as JVAS Conservation Chair, but will remain on the Conservation Committee.



Stan says, "**THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE THAT I WILL GIVE TO THE INCOMING CONSERVATION CHAIR: As soon as a destructive project is heard of, hit it hard and crush it in its infancy. Waiting till it becomes a certainty dooms the effort to being difficult or impossible. Developers and their investors do not like controversy, especially at the early stage of a project.**"

President's Message: Golden-winged Warbler Weekend

-Laura Jackson

President's Message



Steven D'Amato

Mark your calendar for the Golden-winged Warbler Weekend on Friday, April 10, & Saturday, April 11, 2015.

I know the upcoming winter will be short, as I'm already looking forward to our chapter activities that are planned for this spring. In addition to the field trips and driving tours that are described in the **Winter and Spring Field Trips** section of the newsletter, I'm looking forward to a special symposium that JVAS is planning with the help of the Penn State Altoona campus, to be held on Friday, April

10 and Saturday, April 11. We've invited researchers from Cornell and Indiana University of Pennsylvania to share their findings with us. Not only will we hear about some neat research on the breeding of Golden-winged Warblers here in Pennsylvania, we will also find out where Golden-winged Warblers migrate for the winter. One of the researchers, Ruth Bennett, a doctoral grad student at Cornell, lived in Honduras for 3 years as a Peace Corps Volunteer, while doing a research project on Golden-winged Warblers and other Neotropical migrants. We think of these birds as "our birds" when they return each spring, but they spend most of their lives away from Pennsylvania. Many birds might breed in Pennsylvania, but they are only here for about 4 or 5 months.

More than 200 species of birds are considered Neotropical migrants, since they fly to Central or South America for the winter. Warblers, Scarlet Tanagers, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, shorebirds, and some raptors are Neotropical migrants.

Mike and I documented Golden-winged Warblers in our forest back in the late 1980's, after many trees were killed due to the massive gypsy moth invasion that hit Bedford County around 1983. In company with Golden-winged Warblers, we also enjoyed watching Yellow-breasted Chats, the spiraling mating flight of the American Woodcock, the almost daily lawnmower drumming of the Ruffed Grouse, and the loud nocturnal calls of the Whip-poor-will. Except for the Whip-poor-will, and the occasional Woodcock, we don't hear or see these species anymore on our property and we miss them.

That's one reason why we got involved in the Golden-winged Warbler program, working with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Bureau of Forestry. Foresters and biologists examined our forest and confirmed what we thought: non-native invasive species like Japanese barberry, Multiflora Rose, and Japanese Honeysuckle vines, all perfectly content to grow under a closed canopy, were a deadly combination in our forest. Deer browsed the few tree seedlings that managed to grow in the shade. Our feeble attempts to control the invasive species were futile. With the expert advice from biologists and foresters, we took drastic action and opened the forest – removing the understory and leaving some of the big trees. Then we had a deer exclusion fence installed around the 27-acre two-stage shelterwood harvest to protect the flush of next spring's new growth. We were lucky that this fall was an exceptional mast year -there are places inside the fence where the ground is covered with acorns. It will be exciting to see what happens in the spring!

We hope you will join us on **Saturday, May 16** to enjoy a walk in our woods – most of which has **not** been cut. You'll see what the forest looks like inside the fence, where most of the trees were cut, and outside the fence where shade and deer still stifle regeneration. We'll discuss the pros and cons of what we did and why. But best of all, you'll enjoy a day of birdsong, wildflowers, and good company. No rain in this forecast!

The Juniata Valley Audubon Society (JVAS) is a chapter of the National Audubon Society and is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity. Juniata Valley Audubon accomplishes its mission through advocacy, science, land stewardship, and education - working directly with Audubon Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania state office of the National Audubon Society.

The JVAS is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit, educational organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Gifts are deductible for income tax purposes (Tax ID # 25-1533496).

OFFICERS

President, Laura Jackson

- ◆ 814-652-9268
- ◆ mljackson2@embarqmail.com

Vice President, Mark Bonta

- ◆ 610-348-3282
- ◆ mab86@psu.edu

Secretary, Kristin Joivell

- ◆ 814-386-6267
- ◆ kristinjean@hotmail.com

Treasurer, George Mahon

- ◆ 814-942-2658
- ◆ gsm815@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President, Dave Bonta

- ◆ 814-686-7274
- ◆ bontasaurus@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership Committee, Charlie Hoyer

- ◆ 814-684-7376
- ◆ charma77@verizon.net

Conservation Committee, Vacant

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Education Committee, Mark Bonta

- ◆ 610-348-3282
- ◆ mab86@psu.edu

Field Trips Committee, Deb Tencer

- ◆ 814-932-9183
- ◆ naturehikergal@gmail.com

Programs Committee, Mark Bonta

- ◆ 610-348-3282
- ◆ mab86@psu.edu

Publications & Publicity Committee, Vacant

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Hospitality Committee, Marcia Bonta

- ◆ 814-684-3113
- ◆ marciabonta@hotmail.com

Historian, Mike Jackson

- ◆ 814-652-9268
- ◆ mljackson2@embarqmail.com

Website Administrator, Dave Bonta

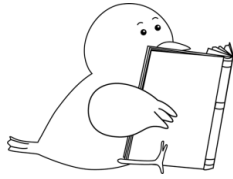
- ◆ 814-686-7274
- ◆ bontasaurus@yahoo.com

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Warren Baker

- ◆ 814-684-4549

Off the Shelf



We hope "Off The Shelf" will appear in every issue of *The Gnatcatcher*, but that will only happen if you send in your reviews of natural history books. We also welcome feedback. Email Laura Jackson to contribute a book review, or if you have a comment about a book that was reviewed. Please note that contributions for the next newsletter should be sent to Laura by **February 1, 2015**. Good reading!

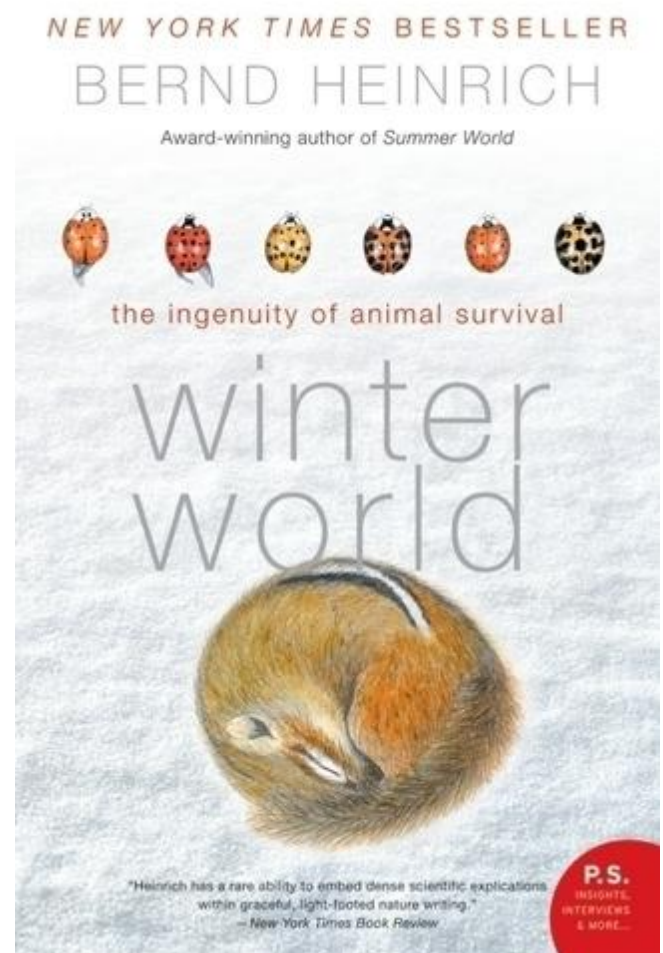
A Review of Bernd Heinrich's Winter World

By Kristin Joivell

My procedure for getting ready for time outside in the dead cold of winter always entails putting on layer after layer of clothing. After all, I subscribe fully to the old Scandinavian saying that reminds us "there is no bad weather, only bad clothing." After a number of layers, the Pennsylvania winter temperatures are bearable and hours spent outdoors are pleasant and enjoyable.

I can spend a lot of time outside in the coldest temperatures if I have adequate clothing, but animals survive day after day and night after night in these frigid temperatures all winter long. I've always wondered what animals do to survive through the long harsh winters. In Winter World, Bernd Heinrich lends insight into animal adaptations for winter survival. From insects to birds to mammals, Heinrich explains exactly how animals survive through the coldest temperatures. Using first hand observations with close attention to detail, Heinrich uses a combination of storytelling and science to reveal the secrets of animal survival in winter.

Heinrich believes that "the wonders of nature dwell in the minds of sentient beings who are receptive to them." So, don't forget to take time to emerge from your warm, climate controlled homes to explore the many wonders of the natural world during the winter season. But when you're done exploring outdoors, pull up a nice comfortable chair next to a warm fire and curl up with Heinrich's Winter World to continue your exploration indoors.



GOLDEN EAGLE DAYS ON JACKS AND STONE MOUNTAINS

-Laura Jackson

Until just recently, Jacks and Stone Mountains in Mifflin and Huntingdon Counties were proposed sites for up to 112 industrial wind turbines, strung along the tops of the two mountains for many miles. Since the summits of Jacks and Stone are very narrow, steep, and rocky, the two wind companies, E.ON and Volkswind, would have done major damage to the mountaintops and watersheds.

Fortunately, thanks to the educational outreach of Save Our Allegheny Ridges and Friends of Jacks Mountain, the wind companies have not been able to procure many wind development leases and they recently withdrew their applications on the PJM Grid. In November, E.ON decided to pull out completely and sent termination letters to the landowners who had leased.

We hope that Volkswind will do the same and cancel their planned wind project of 20 turbines on Jacks Mountain.

Meanwhile, hawk watchers on Jacks and Stone Mountains have experienced outstanding Golden Eagle migrations this fall. In the fall, Golden eagles fly south from Canada, using the winds blowing from the Northwest and West. Winds from this direction produce good raptor flight days on Stone Mountain. When these winds have pushed Golden Eagles far enough south, they may use Jacks Mountain when the winds change to Southeast and East winds.

Greg Grove and Nick Bolgiano, regular counters at Stone Mountain, report that they have a shot at their biggest Golden Eagle year. They had two great days with 22 Golden Eagles each on Nov. 2 and Nov. 12 – which rank in the top ten days ever. Their record high is 25 for one day, which they've experienced 4 times since 1995. As of December 7, their fall count was 142 Golden Eagles. Bald Eagles are also getting close to a record high this year.

Counters on Jacks Mountain have already experienced a record-breaking year for Golden Eagle migration. They've counted 141 Golden Eagles as of December 8, 2014, which is an all-time yearly record – and the migration isn't over yet. Just one day this fall, on October 31, counters saw 56 Golden Eagles fly over Jacks. The number counted so far this year sets 2014 as a record year. The next highest counts were 63 Golden Eagles counted in 1995 and 69 in 2012.

Darrell Smith, a long-time counter, was on Jacks on October 31st and experienced the historic Golden Eagle flight. Here is his account:

A HISTORIC DAY ON JACKS MOUNTAIN HAWK WATCH 10-31-14

Darrell Smith

It was around 12:30pm Eastern Standard Time when I asked Craig Kochel whether he was going to stick around or head back home, which is a little over a 2 hour drive for him. He said that he was trying to make up his mind but hadn't decided yet. We talked about the lack of raptors flying when we had a good SE wind.

But don't let me get ahead of myself. It was around 9:05am Eastern Standard Time on Friday, October 31st when I pulled into the parking lot at the Jacks Mountain Hawk Watch. I saw that Craig Kochel, a professor from Bucknell University was already on watch. Craig and I have spent many days on Jacks together and I enjoy his company very much. I said hello and asked him if he had seen anything yet. He said that he saw a Female Northern Harrier and a Red-tailed Hawk. I spent a few minutes getting some things together and proceeded to get my observation sheet started. The wind was from the SE at around 6 to 11 miles per hour. I could see approximately 22 Kilometers with 100% overcast skies and no precipitation. I put down the Harrier and the Red-tail and watched toward the north with Craig, hoping to have a good day.

Fast forward to about 12:50pm, since we did not see a single raptor the rest of the morning. Craig and I remarked about how unusual it was that we were not seeing any raptors with a good SE wind, but we know the birds do what they want,

when they want. As I said previously, we were both wondering if it was worth spending any more time on watch and then it happened. We saw a large bird coming from the north which turned out to be an adult Golden Eagle at 12:55. That bird started a parade of Golden Eagles that would last for over 2 ½ hours. I will now list the times and identification of Golden Eagles as A for Adult, Imm for Immature and U for Unknown maturity. It was extremely dark at times and overcast all day which made it hard to identify the maturity of many.

Although many of the Eagles were at the limit of unaided vision there were also many much lower and some at eye level. At 1:38 we had 8 Golden Eagles in a Kettle on the west side of the Jacks and at 2:19 we had a kettle of 5 Golden Eagles on the east side. It was also interesting to note that many eagles came in pairs - not necessarily mated pairs but appeared to be traveling together. It was one of those days that come once in a lifetime for raptor watchers during the migration.

There was a time after we counted about 26 Golden Eagles that I told Craig I was going to look up the all-time one-day record for Jacks Mountain. I found it in my records that in 1995, 31 Golden Eagles were recorded on Jacks Mountain Hawk Watch. I said it would be great if we could break it. In the next 15 minutes we passed the old record of 31 and were well on our way to 40. The next time I checked our numbers we were at 49 and said it would be great to get 50. We never stopped at 50 on our way to the grand total of 56 Golden Eagles.

I thank God that Craig was there that day to observe with me, for I would never have seen all 56. You all know the more eyes the better. Craig picked up many that I would have missed.

What happened that day on Jacks will be forever, something that Craig and I will share and never forget.



Photo Credit: Laura Jackson

Trish Miller and Mike Lanzone outfitted Golden Eagle #40 with a transmitter on November 25, 2006, in order to follow its migration after being released at the Allegheny Front Hawk Watch.

You can see its telemetry track at <http://katznerlab.com/golden-eagle-tracking-maps#/fullscreen/6030695>

Most of us have never heard of a Three-wattled Bellbird, but Mark Bonta, JVAS Vice-President, is part of a research team studying this rare bird in Honduras.

Research Team Tags Rare Bellbirds for Satellite Monitoring Study

-Zoo Conservation Outreach Group

Silver Spring, MD—For the first time ever, researchers have affixed Global Positioning System (GPS) transmitters to one of Central America's most endangered bird species, the Three-wattled Bellbird (*Procnias tricarunculatus*). This enigmatic bird is characterized by unique vocalizations, including squeaks, bonks, and thunderous bell-like sounds that register among the loudest bird calls on the planet. In late September, a field research team led by Dr. Robin Bjork traveled deep into the cloud forests of the Sierra de Agalta National Park in eastern Honduras, captured four of the rare bellbirds, and affixed state-of-the-art solar powered GPS units to the birds before releasing them back into the wild. The field research is a crucial component of the Zoo Conservation Outreach Group's (ZCOG) Three-wattled Bellbird Conservation Monitoring Program, and this latest accomplishment has already enabled the researchers to begin studying the complex migratory movements of the bellbirds. The ultimate goal of the project is to better understand the behavioral ecology of the bellbirds in an effort to promote conservation of the species and the preservation of its tropical cloud forest habitat.

Three-wattled Bellbirds range from Honduras to Panama, and the males are distinguished by having three long, prominent 'wattles' that hang from the corners of the mouth and beak, and for producing loud, unmistakable vocalizations that can be heard over a kilometer away. Dr. Robin Bjork described being mesmerized by the "symphony of loud bells, bonks, and squeaks calling all around us," as the team set up treetop capture nets in the Sierra de Agalta National Park. Bellbirds congregate in the rugged Sierra de Agalta region of Eastern Honduras to feast on abundant fruiting trees from July through September, and then migrate to other cloud forests. Bellbirds have complex annual migratory movements between some of the most biodiverse—and threatened—regions of Central America, and present various challenges for conservation.

ZCOG Executive Director Dr. Daniel Hilliard says that, "the Bellbird Conservation Monitoring Program aims to fill a gap in scientific knowledge by providing a better understanding of the migratory patterns of the bird,

which are crucial to developing comprehensive conservation planning." The research team that captured and tagged the birds was led by Dr. Robin Bjork, and included Jenifer Hernández, a biologist with the Honduran Forestry, National Parks and Wildlife Institute (ICF), and local conservationist Isidro Zuniga. Additional support was provided by Dr. Mark Bonta and Robert Hyman of the Honduran Conservation Coalition, and Said Lainez, Director of the Department of Wildlife at ICF. The program is funded by Zoo Boise, Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens, and the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund (DWCF). Microwave Telemetry provided the state-of-the-art GPS monitoring devices, which are solar powered and weigh less than five grams, allowing for the collection of remote satellite data for the first time. The research team is already collecting data from the four bellbirds that were released back into the wild, and hope to learn even more as the program proceeds. Dr. Mark Bonta, project consultant and author of *Seven Names for the Bellbird* (Texas A&M Press, 2003), hopes that the research "will not only expand our information about the Three-wattled Bellbird, but also draw attention to sustainable development and forest management in the Sierra de Agalta region."

Zoo Conservation Outreach Group (ZCOG) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that develops, supports, and promotes wildlife and habitat conservation partnerships throughout the Americas. For additional information about ZCOG: www.zcog.org



This male Three-wattled Bellbird was outfitted with a GPS transmitter in September and then released in Sierra de Agalta National Park in Honduras. The satellite actually shows them moving from tree to tree.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Please send your newsletter submissions to Laura Jackson (mljackson2@embargmail.com) by the first of February, April, August, October, and December, in order to be printed in the subsequent issue of *The Gnatcatcher*. Please submit conservation news, field trip reports, book reviews, poetry, or a nature article that you think will interest our members.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS...

SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO

JVAS 2015 Winter and Spring Field Trips

Mark Your Calendar:

February 1: Blue Knob Hike

March 14: Dunning Creek Wetlands Birding Hike

March 29: Periglacial Landscapes of Central PA (Driving tour)

April 19: Annual Trillium Hike

May 5: Sweetwater Farm Birding Trip and Tour of Green Drake Gallery and Arts Center

May 9: Life in the River

May 10: Trough Creek Wildflower Ramble

May 16: Mountain Meadows Nature Hike

May 23: Golden-winged Warbler Driving Tour



Oil Painting of a Blackburnian Warbler
by Karl Eric Leitzel

Sunday, February 1: Blue Knob State Park Hike starts at 11 A.M.

Join us the day before Groundhog Day for a 2-hour hike starting at 11 A.M. Snowshoes are recommended if there is enough snow on the ground. Bring a snack. Meet at Chappell's Field parking lot, across from the entrance to the camping area, Forest Road/Blue Knob Road (SR 4035). Contact hike leader Dave Hunter for more information and updates: davmhunter@aol.com

Saturday, March 14: Dunning Creek Wetlands Birding Hike starts at 8:30 A.M.

Meet at the Eat 2 Live Bistro on Rt. 56 (formerly Apple Bin) 1634 Quaker Valley Rd, New Paris, PA 15554 at 8:30 A.M. We will carpool a short distance to the wetlands. The hike will last about 3 hours, with a stop in the bird blind. Wear waterproof boots, bring binoculars, listen to the forecast, and dress accordingly. Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268. Optional Lunch at Eat 2 Live Bistro. Menu is posted on Eat 2 Live Facebook page.

Sunday, March 29: Periglacial landscapes of central Pa. Driving Tour starts at 8 A. M.

All-day driving tour led by Dr. Mark Bonta on Sunday, March 29 that begins and ends at the I-99 park-and-ride lot in Tyrone, visiting several spots in the Nittany anticline and in Bald Eagle valley. Leave at 8 A.M. and return at dusk. Total number of miles driven per vehicle will be about 150 round-trip from Tyrone; short walks at some spots. Contact Mark in advance (mab86@psu.edu) to receive a packet containing field trip map, photos, and descriptions of features; he will also bring a few extra packets along on the trip. Bring picnic lunch and snacks.

Description: During the last million years, and as recently as 12,000 years ago, central Pennsylvania experienced periglacial climates as cold as those of present-day Greenland, thanks to nearby continental glaciers. Ancient landscape features associated with pervasive cold and intense cycles of freeze and thaw as well as rapid global warming, are ubiquitous in the valleys and hill slopes of the region. We will visit a representative sample of these features and discuss parallels with what is happening in the Arctic today. In addition to widespread felsenmeer and boulder trains, we will examine solifluction lobes, thermokarst gullies, debris fans, *grèzes litées*, and other geomorphological features. During much of the trip, we will parallel the presumed waterline of proglacial Lake Lesley, viewing and discussing evidence for and against a *jökulhlaup* (glacial lake outburst flood) down the Juniata some 750,000 years ago.

Sunday April 19: Lower Trail Annual Trillium Hike starts at 1 P.M.

Enjoy an easy 2-mile walk on the Lower Trail to view the annual showing of thousands of Trilliums and Dutchman's Breeches, in addition to many other early spring wildflowers. Meet at 1:00 P.M. at the Water Street entrance of the Lower Trail, along Rt. 22. Questions? Trip Leader: Deb Tencer naturehikergal@gmail.com

Tuesday, May 5: Sweetwater Farm Birding Trip and Tour of Green Drake Gallery starts at 9 A.M.

We will visit Sweetwater Farm at 155 Murray School Lane in Spring Mills for a few hours of spring migration birding hosted by Karl Leitzel, then drive 10 minutes to the Green Drake Gallery & Arts Center at 101-B West Main St., Millheim, for a tour of the gallery. Karl is a Managing Partner and Resident Artist of the Green Drake. Karl has promised to demonstrate his technique in painting birds like the beautiful Blackburnian Warbler shown above. The tour will be followed by lunch at the nearby Inglebean Coffee House. Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268.

Saturday, May 9: Life in the River (More details in the next newsletter)

There will be a short hike to a river to do a biotic index – collecting aquatic insects to evaluate the water quality. Trip Leader: Kristin Joivell

Sunday, May 10: Trough Creek State Park Wildflower Ramble starts at 10:00 AM

There are a few areas of moderate difficulty, but this is not a true hike. As on past wildflower rambles, be prepared to dawdle and examine nearly every plant we pass in full wildflower geek-out mode for approximately the next 5 hours. We can't go to Trough Creek State Park without saying hello to the balanced rock, however, so meet us at 10:00 A.M. at the Balanced Rock trailhead on Trough Creek Drive. Bring a packed lunch. Trip Leaders: Marcia and Dave Bonta 814-684-3113.

Saturday, May 16: Mountain Meadows Nature Hike starts at 10:00 A.M.

The nature walk will last from 10 AM to noon. Highlights will include exploring the native wildflower gardens and bird watching along the trails. Participants will also see how a recent shelterwood cut will provide better habitat for early successional species such as woodcock, whip-poor-wills, and golden-winged warblers. Wear sturdy walking shoes, bring a lunch and drink.

Directions: Take I-99 South to the Everett exit. Follow Rt. 30 East for about 8 miles. Take the exit for Business Rt. 30 into Everett. Turn Right onto 5th Ave. and cross a bridge over the Raystown Branch. (If you pass the Everett Foodliner you have gone too far.) Then make an immediate Right onto Black Valley Road. After 2.5 miles, turn Right onto a gravel road labeled "The Jacksons." Follow this lane for 0.5 miles and watch for parking signs. Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268 Address: 8621 Black Valley Road Everett, PA 15537

Saturday, May 23: Golden-winged Warbler Driving Tour starts at 8 A.M.

We will carpool from the parking lot at Dave's Dream Restaurant in Hollidaysburg to SGL 322 in Huntingdon County to search for one of Pennsylvania's most secretive and elusive songbirds. They are breeding on SGL 322, so we should find them. Be prepared to walk short distances on trails. From there we will drive to a nearby location on private property where Golden-winged Warblers may be seen or heard. Bring binoculars. Round trip distance is about 80 miles. Optional lunch at Dave's Dream Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268

The JVAS Board Needs Your Help!!!

We would love to have volunteers to fill the following positions:

- **Publications and Publicity Committee Chair:**
 - Current members on the committee are Dave Bonta, Alan Swann, and Terri Swann
- **Conservation Chair:**
 - Current members on the committee are Stan Kotala and Laura Jackson
- **Director-at-Large:**
 - Right now we only have one “Director-at-Large”, so we need two more volunteers to fill these positions.

The JVAS Board meets at 6:30 P.M. on the first Tuesday of February, April, August, October, and December.

All members are welcome to attend!

Online at JVAS.org
or visit JVAS on Facebook



Watching Backyard Birds Can Chase Away The Winter Blues

Don't Forget To Fill Your Bird Feeders!

-Photos by Mike and Laura Jackson



PROGRAM MEETINGS

Our monthly program meetings are free and open to everyone. Our usual location is the [Bellwood-Antis Public Library](#) and refreshments are provided. The programs last about an hour, following a brief sharing of conservation news, wildlife sightings and club business. Audience members with time constraints are able to slip out at any time, and late-comers are welcome as well.

Our next JVAS Board meeting will be at the Bellwood Library at 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, February 3rd.

JVAS Winter and Spring 2015 Programs

Our programs, designed for a general audience, are free and open to the public. We meet in the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA

Directions: Take Interstate I-99 to the Bellwood/Route 865 Exit (Exit 41). Follow Rt. 865 through the Sheetz/Martin's intersection. Proceed about 4 blocks and turn right at the "Business District" sign, just before the railroad overpass. Turn left at the dead end and travel to the stop sign. Continue straight for a short distance; the library will be on your right.



Hold two quarters in your hand -
that's about the weight of a
Black-capped Chickadee!

Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson



White-throated Sparrows
even sing in the winter,
"Oh, Canada, Canada."

Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson

January 20, 2015: Member's Night

Our annual Member's Night is always a good time, with lots of socializing and an impressive assortment of slideshows, videos, wildlife art, nature poetry, nature crafts, and other by-products of our on-going fascination with the natural world. Contact Programs Chair Mark Bonta (mab86@psu.edu) by Tuesday, January 13, if you'd like to bring something to share.

February 17, 2015: Invasive Plants

TALK: Thinking holistically about invasive plants on your farm and in your woods

SPEAKER: Eric Burkhart is the instructor and Plant Science Program Director for Shaver's Creek Environmental Center.

The topic of invasive plants can be confusing, contradictory, and even controversial for landowners wondering what, if anything, they should do about invasive plants on their farm or in their woods. This talk will present current philosophical and practical approaches to thinking about and managing invasive plants on your land. Guidance and considerations relating to the potential impacts of invasive plants, control and management strategies, staging and timing of control activities, and restoration of heavily invaded areas will be discussed.

2015 Programs continued...

Mar 17, 2015: Golden-winged Warblers and Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer

TALK: Part 1: Forest management along a utility right-of-way induces use by Golden-winged Warblers

Part 2: Chronic wasting disease: what is it, where is it, what does it mean for Pennsylvania?

SPEAKER: Justin Vreeland is the regional Wildlife Management Supervisor for the South Central region of the PA Game Commission.

From 2006-2009, the PA Game Commission conducted a 110-acre commercial timber sale in northern Huntingdon County on State Game Lands 322 where golden-winged warblers were known to use a power line right-of-way. The first talk will explain how this bird has responded to that timber sale. (JVAS will lead a driving tour to SGL 322 on May 23 to see these beautiful, but secretive birds.)

Chronic wasting disease is an important disease of white-tailed deer that was first encountered in Pennsylvania in 2012. CWD has been found in captive and free-ranging populations in three areas in Pennsylvania, including Blair and Bedford counties. The second talk will explain what the disease is, what it does to deer and deer populations, and how the Pennsylvania Game Commission is responding to CWD.

April 21, 2015: JVAS Annual Banquet Silent Auction 5:30 PM Dinner 6 PM

TALK: Monitoring the response of Golden-winged Warbler Habitat Management

SPEAKERS: Jeff Larkin is a Professor of Ecology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and an American Bird Conservancy grant recipient. Darin J. McNeil is a graduate student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania under Dr. Larkin.



Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson

The Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) is a Neotropical migrant bird that breeds in young forest habitats and is experiencing steep population declines throughout the Appalachian Mountains. One cause of population declines is loss of breeding habitat. Since 2010, the Pennsylvania Young Forest Council has overseen the implementation of Golden-winged Warbler habitat management guidelines. We will present an update on the number of acres created and the key factors to our success. We will also share our findings from an ongoing study that is evaluating Golden-winged Warbler response to habitat management using conservation practices suggested by the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Working lands For Wildlife (WLFW) Initiative in the Southern and Central Appalachian states. In particular, we will share findings regarding territory density, nest success, and post-fledgling survival and habitat at study areas placed into four NRCS conservation practice groupings: brush management, prescribed fire, prescribed grazing with brush management, and timber harvest.

May 19, 2015: Amphibian Diseases

TALK: The occurrence of emergent infectious diseases in Pennsylvania's amphibian populations

SPEAKER: James Julian an Assistant Professor of Biology in the Division of Math and Natural Sciences at Penn State Altoona.

Dr. Julian will speak about his research on emergent diseases in Green Frog (*Lithobates clamitans melanota*) populations, and about important, related research on the Wood Frog and the Hellbender.

2015 Programs continued...

June 16, 2015: Maxine Levarchik Memorial Picnic 6 P.M. Pine Hill Picnic Area Rothrock State Forest

Bring a covered dish and your own tableware for a 6 P.M. covered dish social at the Pine Hill Picnic Area, located in Rothrock State Forest, along Diamond Valley Road, northwest of Petersburg. Visitors will find two picnic pavilions, picnic tables, grills, and toilet facilities. We will explore the woods and stream near the picnic area, looking for all sorts of woodland and aquatic critters. For more information, contact Hospitality Chair Marcia Bonta at 684-3113.

Directions to Pine Hill Picnic Area

From Route 22 at Alexandria:

Turn onto PA-305 / Bridge St for 0.5 miles.
Turn right to stay on PA-305 / Main St for 3.0 miles.
Arrive at Petersburg, PA on PA-305 / Diamond St.
Turn left to stay on PA-305 / King St for 0.7 miles.
Turn left onto Diamond Valley Rd for 1.5 miles.
Keep right to stay on Diamond Valley Rd for 3.5 miles.
Arrive at Pine Hill Picnic Area.

From State College:

Depart on PA-26 S / W College Ave. Keep straight onto PA-26 / W College Ave.
Keep straight onto PA-26 / PA-45 / Pine Grove Rd for 1.3 miles.
Turn left onto PA-26 / Water St for 2.0 miles.
Keep straight onto PA-760 / McAlevy's Fort Rd for 2.1 miles.
Turn right onto Charter Oak Rd for 5.9 miles.
Bear right onto PA-305 / Shavers Creek Rd for 1.3 miles.
Turn right onto Globe Run Rd for 2.4 miles.
Road name changes to Diamond Valley Rd for 2.0 miles.
Arrive at Pine Hill Picnic Area.
(The last intersection is Morton Rd. If you reach Mule Rd, you've gone too far.)



Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson



If you are really lucky, a Baltimore Oriole might visit your bird feeder. We photographed this unusual visitor at a neighbor's feeder during the 2011 Christmas Bird Count.

Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson



Why You Can Feel Good About Being a JVAS Member

You are part of an important group that is "dedicated to the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems" through advocacy, science, land stewardship, and education -- working directly with Audubon Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania state office of the National Audubon Society. We hope you know how critical your generous support is to our mission. If you are a Chapter-only Member, we also hope you will take this opportunity to renew your membership. Please be

reminded that the membership year for Chapter-only Memberships runs from January 1 to December 31. So, please renew your membership today Thank you! -- Charlie Hoyer

It's Time to Renew Your JVAS Chapter-only Membership

Ignore this reminder if you have a National Audubon Membership

Chapter: A Chapter membership does more to support the JVAS. All Chapter membership dues stay with the JVAS and are used locally in the Juniata Valley for conservation, education, and advocacy in Blair, Huntingdon, Centre, Bedford, and Mifflin Counties.

The JVAS is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, so all donations are deductible (and gratefully accepted). JVAS membership provides you with the following benefits:

- Notification of the Juniata Valley Audubon's exciting activities, monthly programs, field trips, and other events.
- Subscription to the bimonthly chapter newsletter, *The Gnatcatcher*. (But we'd appreciate it if you're willing to forego the print edition and accept the digital version.)
- Opportunity to participate in local advocacy efforts to help make a real difference.
- Opportunity to aid in the preservation of the natural world.
- Opportunity to have fun in joining with fellow nature enthusiasts.

Become a JVAS Chapter member at one of the annual membership categories as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership, \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the JVAS, \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership, \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership, \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Membership, \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership, \$500 |

Membership Year runs from January 1st to December 31st

Make your check payable to the "JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY"

Mail to:

Charlie Hoyer, Membership Chair
Juniata Valley Audubon Society
P.O. Box 42
Tyrone, PA 16686-0042

JVAS Member:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone No. _____ E-mail _____

- ☐ Yes, I will accept the digital copy of *The Gnatcatcher*. ☐ No, I prefer to receive a paper copy.

Save trees! Save funds!

**Please help us save JVAS funds for
conservation projects.**

Email Laura Jackson (MLJACKSON2@EMBARQMAIL.COM)
to sign up for a digital copy of *The Gnatcatcher*.

You'll get *The Gnatcatcher* sooner and the
photos will be in color. We pledge to keep
your e-mail address confidential and we won't
share it with other organizations or
companies.



Gray Squirrels
are just as
much fun
to watch
as birds.

Photo by Mike and Laura Jackson

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON

PO BOX 42

TYRONE, PA 16686-0042

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Altoona, PA
Permit No. 238