

SNAT CATCHER

---

 JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
 

---

Vol 2 No. 7

October 1970

"We travel together, passengers on a little spaceship, dependent on its vulnerable resources of air and soil.... preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and, I will say, the love we give our fragile craft."

-- Adlai Stevenson  
U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. 1961-65

---

 The October Meeting
 

---

Date: Tuesday, October 27th  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Childrens' Theater, Altoona Public Library  
Program: Governor's Conference on the Environment Report

Our president - John Hunter Orr - will report to the group on the 1970 Governor's Conference on the Environment held this year in Hershey, Pa. September 17th and 18th. The theme of the conference was "Total Environmental Education". Many groups, organizations, clubs, and institutions, including our own were represented at this affair. The delegates and panel members drew up recommendations for the Governor.

A possible extra feature of the evening's program could be a colorful slide presentation of Hawk Mountain scenes - local lore, history, scenery, and of course - hawks. At time of publication the society had not yet been given final confirmation and mailing date of slides from the Hawk Mt. Association of Kempton, Pa. This could be trick or treat. (In any case - cold cider and fresh gingerbread will be preferred those wishing a treat)

This meeting, like the last, will be crucial for dispensing tickets and publicity flyers. All is ready. Please try to sell some tickets even if only a few. Our individual efforts have been carrying the lecture series thus far. The number for personal delivery of tickets is 943-5629 after 6:00 p.m. If you can't make this meeting call for tickets. Also, there will be sales at the door as is usual. See below for more information.

---

 "Land of the Giant Cactus"
 

---

After a break-even crowd October 5th we are now ready to go for a fuller house with our second of five films - a production of Allan D. Cruickshank, noted naturalist-ornithologist. Mr. Cruickshank has written numerous books and been long employed in the service of the National Audubon Society. We are extremely fortunate in having a man of his background coming to our first series of film-lectures. Pass the word along that an outstanding speaker and film are coming soon.

Date: November 9th  
Time: 8:00 (Doors open at 7:30p.m.)  
Place: Altoona Area High School Auditorium

Members should obtain tickets at the October 27th meeting. A good promotion will be needed if we are to continue to at least break even on expenses. The season tickets are still being sold at a prorated price - \$4.00 for 4 films adult and \$1.50 for 4 films student. Tickets will be sold at the door. Watch the Altoona Mirror for details and publicity.

---

 "Notes on a Trip to Hawk Mt. - Sat. September 26th"
 

---

The day was balmy, in fact almost too warm for good hawking and the light breeze was southwest. Thunderheads and haze hung all over the sky making distant arrivals hard to spot. The mountain ash berries hung heavily on the tree and sour gum leaves were already a brilliant red. The shade at the "lookout" was welcome and the rocks were no softer than last year. Nevertheless, it was a good and busy day for hawks. Ospreys were the order of the day. Fifty were counted by the profes-

sionals for the daily count while the Juniata Valley group of Mike and Margaret Chonko, Dora Korb and Al Richardson saw about 25 or 30 during their all too short afternoon.

Many glided by at amazing speed on their upswept dihedral at 100 feet over our heads. Turkey Vultures (TVs to some hands) were in excess of 75 - some floating around on the thermals on the southeast side and some riding through to their winter quarters. Marsh Hawks were abundant - sometimes showing their white rump patches in a power dive; sometimes their golden bellies in the glint of the afternoon sun. Kestrels and sharp-shinned hawks flapped by having a harder time gaining altitude against the head wind.

Many broadwings were sighted and a few red-tailed hawks, usually wheeling in great high circles - each circle farther south than the last. During this week, prior to the 26th, over 9,000 broadwings were seen out of a total of 12,000 for the season to date.

But the greatest miracle was the flight of monarch butterflies, one every couple of minutes, serenely sailing by just over the tree tops on their way to some favorite tree in Florida where they will join thousands of their kind - those that make it!

A violent thunderstorm during the night and the following heavy rains on Sunday put off any hopes of seeing birds on the mountain. So, a pleasant hour was spent in the Common's Room studying the skins and stuffed specimens, looking at the literature for sale, and talking to Alex Nagy the curator.

The previous evening the group attended a fascinating lecture on birds of the Midway Islands showing a beautiful film on boobies, albatrosses and other rare birds including the thought to be extinct short-tailed albatross. The talk was given by Chandler S. Robbins, counted among the world's leading ornithologists and stressed the frail ecology of the islands.

On the way down from the mountain, two flocks of blue jays of over 50 each appeared, apparently heading south. I thought they stayed here all winter.

There is another month of good birding on the mountain. Why not plan to make a trip there up until November 30th. It's only four hours away. The view alone is worth the trip.

- Al Richardson

#### A "Kettle" of Hawks

The Webbs and Orrs went east to southern Jersey the 25th of September, traveling and eating light - on the run for birds. Cape May Point was the place to be. Looking for the perfect day - the ultimate in migration phenomenon - a big day of southies; maybe a 100, maybe more different species. The heat was too much for such a day but a "kettle" of broadwings was seen. 50 or so large hawks lifting and dropping south. A blue sky. Many bird-watchers. A nice way to start the day. Saturday was good. More and more, hawks came by at the lighthouse. Pigeon hawks, kestrels, sharpies, coopers ospreys, marsh and broadwings. All of them being watched. Flickers and tree swallows beat by moving fast. Cattle egrets were seen nearby. Saturday evening up coast to Stone Harbor, the sanctuary and more of a different sort: glossy ibises, black-crowned night herons, common egrets, snowy egrets, little blue herons, Louisiana herons and most exotic of all a green parrot.

Juniata Valley Audubon Society  
54 Duff Drive  
Altoona, Pennsylvania 16602