

The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

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as a benefit for members of the...

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



President's Message

My name is Catie Farr and I am the new President of JVAS. I thought for my first president's message I would introduce myself and explain some of my goals for JVAS for the next couple of years.

I am a recent graduate of Penn State University Altoona. I majored in Environmental Studies with minors in History and English. While I was at Penn State Altoona I participated in two internships under Dr. Emili, Associate Professor of Physical Geography and Environmental Studies and the Sustainability Coordinator. I married my best friend in 2016 and we welcomed our first son last fall. We have two cats and one dog; all three were rescue animals, although we think they rescued us. We are a very busy family.



I started the Annual Earth Week Birding Classic (EWBC), under the direction of Dr. Mark Bonta, in 2016. The EWBC raises funds for JVAS and the Penn State Altoona Sustainability Council. It was important to me to raise funds for local groups that work in education and conservation and would also use the money locally. So far, the EWBC has raised almost \$4,000.00 in three years. We've funded conservation projects at Canoe Creek State Park and a Northern Blair Co. wetlands, a scholarship to Audubon Camp at Hog Island, and an internship. I expect the 2019 EWBC to be a success also.

Catie, Ethan, and Joe. Joe is the youngest member of the JVAS Family

After meeting everyone in JVAS, I decided it was a wonderful group to become involved with and not just help support financially. I currently sit for the hospitality chair and I was elected president in April of this year. My goal for JVAS is to have younger members join and become involved with JVAS. I think it is important to educate and include young people on birding and conservation issues. Socially, we are in a perfect time to get people outside, excited and involved in birding. I am grateful to be a part of this wonderful organization and I am excited to see what we can accomplish in the next couple years together.

Cheers!
Catie Farr

JVAS Field Trips Fall 2018

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).

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- ♦ Marcia Bonta
- ♦ Kristin Joivell



Field trip chair is Susan Braun: braun3112@gmail.com (814)574-0795

Check our Facebook page for updates or contact Susan.

Saturday, Sept 8: 9am - 12pm

Birding Banding and Arboretum Walk

Nick Kerlin, bander-in-charge, will present a talk and demonstration about bird banding at the Arboretum at Penn State, H.O. Smith Botanic Gardens. Banding takes place at the Botanic Gardens and it is easy walking to where birds are taken out of the nets. This is an excellent opportunity to see birds up close, learn about banding and take photographs. Afterwards, we can enjoy a walk around the Arboretum followed by a trip to the creamery.

Contact: Susan Braun 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com and let her know if you plan to attend so we can let Nick know how many to expect. Banding will be cancelled if there is precipitation or constant winds above 20 mph.

Meet at the Arboretum Parking lot.

Directions: The Arboretum at Penn State, E Park Ave & Bigler Rd, State College, PA 16803 <https://goo.gl/maps/hWxLqX9G1g82>



Saturday, Sept 22: 10am - 12pm

Tour of the Seminar Forest at Penn State Altoona

Dr. Emili will lead a hike through the Seminar Forest explaining what the Penn State Altoona Sustainability Council does with the money from the Annual Earth Week Birding Classic. This is an easy hike, but wear hiking shoes.

Contact: Catie Farr 570-651-3839 or catiegk5059@gmail.com

Meet in the visitor parking lot, the Ivy Lot, at Penn State Altoona

Directions: 3000 Ivyside Park, Altoona PA 16601, the Parking lot on the left.

Saturday, Sept 29: 1pm - 4pm

Spring Creek Canyon Hike

Meet at the Spring Creek Canyon Trailhead off Shiloh Road for a stroll along beautiful Spring Creek, one of the finest wild trout streams in Pennsylvania. We'll consider the history,

geology and flora and fauna of this area. This is an easy hike of about four miles and we'll grab a bite to eat afterwards in Bellefonte.

Contact: Susan Braun 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com

Meet at the Spring Creek Canyon Trail Head off Shiloh Road

Directions: Spring Creek Canyon Trailhead on Shiloh Road, from the intersections of I99 and Shiloh Road, drive north on Shiloh Road, continue across the bridge onto a gravel roadway and continue to the parking area. <https://goo.gl/maps/F9Dc2Rw7TPC2>



JVAS Field Trips Fall 2018, continued

Field trip chair is Susan Braun: braun3112@gmail.com (814)574-0795

Check our Facebook page for updates or contact Susan.

Sunday, Oct. 7: 2 - 5pm

A Walk in Penn's Woods

Nature walk at Mike and Laura Jackson's woods, 8621 Black Valley Road, Everett, PA 15537. Please RSVP by Friday, Sept. 28, 2018. Phone: 814-652-9268 or email jacksonlaura73@gmail.com. Bring binoculars and wear hiking shoes. We'll take a leisurely stroll through the woods and visit vernal pools looking for all that nature offers.

Directions: Take Rt. 30 into Everett, turn onto W. 5th Ave. and cross the West End bridge, then take an immediate right onto Black Valley Road. Travel 2.5 miles south. Take the first right onto a gravel lane after you pass a bright red/white barn on the right. The half-mile lane ends at the Jacksons' house.

Saturday, October 13: 2pm - sunset

Elk Viewing Field Trip



Let's head up to Elk County to learn about Elk and hopefully have a chance to see these wonderful animals. We'll begin by exploring the Elk County Visitor Center which has informational displays about elk, with trails and viewing areas. We'll finish at the Winslow Hill viewing area. Bring cameras, binoculars, drinks, and food.

Contact: Susan Braun 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com

Meet at the Elk County Visitor Center or call Susan to car pool. <https://goo.gl/maps/qCPzgSTtae12>

Elk County Visitor Center Address: 950 Winslow Hill Rd, Benezette, PA 15821

Contact Susan if you want to do an overnight. Make your own reservations at the Best Western in St. Marys for Sunday, Oct. 13. Call 1-814-834-0000. Nightly Rates for standard king or double beds are \$115 plus tax, or \$103.50 plus tax for AAA members. No pets, no smoking. Includes refrigerator, microwave, and breakfast.

Saturday, Oct 21: 10am - 3pm

Stone Mountain Hawk Watch

October is a great time for a variety of raptors which use PA ridges as they migrate south. The hawk watch platform and vista are located along the Great Eastern Trail with views of both Stone & Big Valley. Pack a lunch, bring sun protection, and dress in layers as weather on the ridge is often colder and windier than in the valleys. Bring your camera and binoculars. Seating is limited on the platform, so packable chairs are recommended.

Contact: Susan Braun 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com for information

Meet at the parking area on Allensville Road at 10am if you would like to walk in with a group or hike in on your own.

<https://goo.gl/maps/nCjxvoihMs42>

Directions from State College: Go south on Rt 26 to Pine Grove Mills. Turn left (up the mountain) at the only traffic light and cross over Tussey Mt. into Huntingdon Co. Continue south several miles to the first small town - McAlevy's Fort. It is about 9.5 miles from Pine Grove Mills to McAlevy's Fort. Just after the fire station and bridge at McAlevy's Fort, at the STOP sign (first one after Pine Grove Mills) - turn left (carefully) onto Rt 305 (also called Greenwood road). Go 0.7 mile, past a large brick church on the left, and then immediately turn right onto Barr road. Continue on this winding road for 0.6 miles. Turn left onto Davis road and follow downhill for approx. 1.2 miles. Turn right onto East Branch Road and follow for 1.6 miles to left turn onto Allensville road (dirt - but drivable except during snow-/ice). Follow Allensville road 3 miles to VERY TOP of mountain (on the way up, ignore a left and then two right turns). Park on the left near the Huntingdon/Mifflin county marker. Enter the woods on the trail on the Northeast side of the road (on your left as you reach the mountain top; on the Huntingdon county side of the marker). Walk 1/4 mile on the orange-blazed Standing Stone Trail along the ridge top.. You can't miss the platform if you STAY ON THE TRAIL ON TOP OF THE RIDGE TOP.



JVAS Field Trips Fall 2018, continued

Field trip chair is Susan Braun: braun3112@gmail.com (814)574-0795

Check our Facebook page for updates or contact Susan.

Saturday, Nov 10: 9am - 1pm

Bald Eagle State Park Birding

Let's explore Bald Eagle State Park to look for migrating waterfowl, hawks and more. The 5,900-acre Bald Eagle State Park is in the broad Bald Eagle Valley in Centre County. It includes a lake below Bald Eagle Mountain which is surrounded by forests, fields and wetlands. We'll stop at several birdy places on our way to the park and within the park. We'll finish by driving to the dam and taking a short walk on an old road. Bring binoculars, drinks, and snacks. We'll stop in Howard afterwards for a bite to eat.

Contact: Susan Braun 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com

Meet at the gravel parking area behind Macdonald's in Milesburg at 9am. <https://goo.gl/maps/gaPD5R4YaaC2>

Friday, November 23: 1pm to 4pm

Post Thanksgiving Day Hike

Going shopping to find all those great Black Friday sales? Follow up your morning of shopping with an afternoon hike on the Lower Trail! After searching for great deals and bargains, you can search for plants going to seed for winter while listening to the sounds of the river. Meet in the Alfarata Station Trailhead parking lot on Main Street in Alexandria at 1pm. We'll carpool from Alfarata to the Mount Etna Trailhead and then hike approximately 5 leisurely miles on this rail trail along the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River back to Alfarata. After the hike, we can gather at Paesano's for food and drink (but definitely not more turkey and pumpkin pie)! If you need more information or have questions, contact trip leader, Kristin Joivell, at 814-386-6267 or email kristinjean@hotmail.com.

Monday, December 31: 11am to 2pm

Last Day Resolution Hike

If your New Year's Resolution is to get outdoors, get started on it a day early! End your year at the Peace Chapel Trail System in Huntingdon as we hike approximately 3 to 4 leisurely miles together on the last day of 2018. As we hike, we can search for animal tracks in the snow (hopefully) and winter plants (definitely). Meet at Detwiler Field in Huntingdon at 11am. Bring a snack and drink for the hike, if you would like, and we can visit one of the local venues in nearby Huntingdon for hot chocolate (and food to warm up with) after the hike! If you need more information or have questions, contact trip leader, Kristin Joivell, at 814-386-6267 or at kristinjean@hotmail.com.

Christmas Bird Counts: A really great way to help with the longest running Citizen Science Project ever!

Blair: December 15. Contact Laura Jackson if you'd like to help: 814-652-9268 or email jacksonlaura73@gmail.com

Bedford: December 29. Contact Laura Jackson if you'd like to help: 814-652-9268 or email jacksonlaura73@gmail.com

Centre (SC and Bald Eagle SP): More details in the next newsletter **Huntingdon:** More details in the next newsletter



JVAS is conducting 3 interactive programs for Gardeners emphasizing how native plants, water features, and cover are critical for pollinators and birds. Learn how to turn your own yard into a healthy habitat.

For More Details and to Register <https://extension.psu.edu/backyard-native-plants-bird-friendly-backyard>

When: 1st 3 Mondays in October: 1, 8, 15, 2018 (5:30 PM - 7:30 PM). Attend just 1 or all 3. \$10 per program.

Where: Altoona Area Public Library Theater 1600 5th Ave., Altoona, Pennsylvania 16602

Registration Deadline is **Thursday, September 27, 2018** for the Oct. 1 program.

Sponsored by Blair County Master Gardeners



Juniata Valley Audubon Society 3rd Tuesday Evening Programs

Check our Facebook page for updates.

Our evening programs are designed for a general audience; all programs are free and open to the public. **A free dinner, including shade organic coffee, starts at 6:00 PM, and the meeting starts at 6:45 PM.** 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.

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

Nate Nagle: *Ruffed Grouse and The West Nile Virus: A Precursor For Something More?*

Nate will discuss his involvement in the Ruffed Grouse West Nile Virus study conducted by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. In addition to talking about the details of the study, Nate will also discuss what the results could mean for other wildlife species, the environment, and humans. Populations of Ruffed Grouse, our state bird, are alarmingly low. Find out why.

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

John Carter, Brian Schmoke, Sean Herrmann: *Arsonist Raptors in Australia Summary Discussion*

Bird watchers keep a life list, noting each new species that they discover, along with important details such as the date and location. When you venture to a part of the globe that you have never seen before, you can be certain you will find birds that are new to you and have attention-grabbing behaviors. This is exactly what a group of Central Pennsylvanian birders found during an expedition in Northern Australia with Dr. Mark Bonta in May 2018. We are excited to share with the JVAS group our still photography and video, as well as data on fire dynamics, bird species observed around fires, what the raptors were eating, and more. We will talk about the controlled burns that we worked around with Nathan Ferguson, the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service commanding officer at Tennant Creek; and the Jawoyn Rangers, an Aboriginal land management corporation in Katherine.

Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2018

Laura Jackson: *Winter Bird Identification Workshop*

This interactive program is geared toward beginning and advanced birders of all ages, as well as bird lovers and bird feeder watchers. If you enjoy watching birds, then this program will help you learn the skills needed to identify many of the birds in your backyard. There will also be information shared on the annual Christmas Bird Count, which will be held on Saturday, Dec. 15. A handout on Winter Bird ID Tips will be available to all participants. Bird feeders and bird seed will be given away as door prizes.

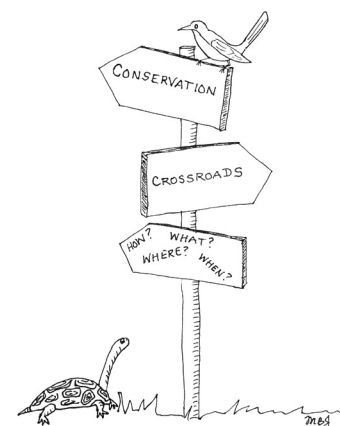
Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018

Night at the Movies: *Cathedral - The Fight to Save the Ancient Hemlocks of Cook Forest*

The 8,500-acre Cook Forest State Park's "Forest Cathedral" of towering white pines and hemlocks is a National Natural Landmark, but the ancient hemlocks are under threat from the hemlock wooly adelgid (HWA) - a deadly insect from Asia. This 22-min. film captures not only the scenic beauty of the forest, its wild inhabitants, and natural history, but also the process of saving the forest from the HWA and the important work being done by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry personnel.

We'll collect donations at the door - all proceeds go to Cook Forest State Park or the Cook Forest Friends for HWA treatment and education. Let's send a Christmas present to the hemlocks in Cook Forest.

CONSERVATION CROSSROADS is a section of *The Gnatcatcher* that features environmental issues across a spectrum of local, national, and global concerns. Contact JVAS Vice-President Laura Jackson, if you know of an issue that deserves our attention and subsequent action. More information on these concerns is found at www.JVAS.org. Click on the Conservation tab.



1. Proposed Hawn's Bridge Peninsula Development in Lake Raystown, Huntingdon County

Send your comments before **September 30, 2018**, to RaystownMPrevision@usace.army.mil or via mail to the following address: Raystown Lake Office, 6145 Seven Points Road, Hesston, PA 16647. Read our comment letter at www.JVAS.org under the Conservation tab. Check out the Coalition's FB page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/295642750929912/>. Click on the files section. The report sent by the Pa. Striped Bass Assoc. is especially informative.

2. Industrial Wind Projects

A. JVAS has written an opposition letter to a proposed industrial wind project, which would be located in the Wild Creek Watershed - a forested area on 3 mountains in Carbon Co. which contains globally rare habitats and wildlife. The letter is posted at www.JVAS.org under the Conservation tab.

B. JVAS officers hope to attend a tour of the Sandy Ridge wind project with Tyrone Mayor Latchford and Borough Council, so we can educate them on various environmental impacts. The developer, Algonquin Power, wants to expand the project, partly located in the Tyrone Reservoir watershed on the Allegheny Front, an important migratory flyway for birds and bats.

3. Pumped Hydro Storage Projects (What are these? See the Sept./October 2017 issue of *The Gnatcatcher*)

There are two proposed projects on the Allegheny Front in Blair County. The Bacon Ridge project would be located next to the Sandy Ridge Wind project and the Allegheny project near the Allegheny Ridge Wind project. The Developer, Merchant Hydro, recently restructured and asked FERC to approve the company's new name; but that approval would mean Merchant Hydro's preliminary permits would be withdrawn and the new company, Renewable Energy Aggregators, Inc., would have to initiate the entire application process. We are waiting to see what happens.



Noticing Seasonal Changes? It's Phenology!

-by Kristin Joivell, Kindergarten Teacher at Juniata Valley Elementary

You may remember reading about phenology, the study of the timing of seasonal events, in a previous *Gnatcatcher* article earlier this year. Have you been keeping an eye on the phenological events in your area? Have you noticed some plants already going to seed? Or have you noticed raptors beginning their fall migrations? Perhaps you have heard of phenological mismatch where the timing of seasonal events doesn't coincide at the same times it has historically, such as bird nesting times and the emergence of caterpillars. Conducting phenology studies is just one of the ways that scientists can examine the effects of climate change on ecosystems.

Over the past two years, Kristin Joivell, JVAS member and Director-at-Large, conducted phenology studies with students at Juniata Valley Elementary School. Through her work in the APPLES (Arctic Plant Phenology: Learning through Engaged Science) program and experiences assisting Dr. Eric Post with his research in Greenland, she developed a program for students at her school to learn about the science of phenology.

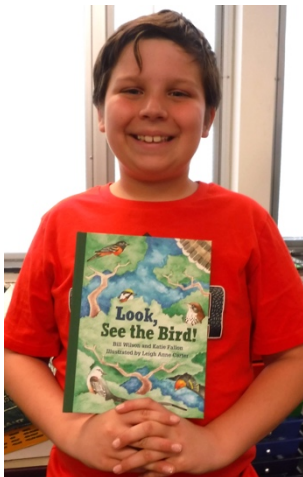
Over the span of the project, her students monitored a sugar maple tree to keep track of phenophases, stages in the tree's life such as leaf emergence or leaf color change. The young scientists also compared and contrasted tulip and crocus bulbs in warmed and unwarmed plots to monitor responses to temperature change. Additionally, the children grew basil in a crop production study to find out how warming temperatures affect the biomass of agricultural plants. Students in all grades also were able to attend fall, winter, and spring phenology events focusing on the life emerging during those periods on the Juniata Valley school campus.



JVAS members Deb and Greg Grove, as well as State College Bird Club volunteer Joe Gyekis, helped students use binoculars borrowed from JVAS at the spring activity. These binoculars are available to sign out for your own use as an individual or with a group. But how? Just contact Laura Jackson if you would like to borrow some. Or, show up at a field trip - we'll try to have them available for most of the trips.

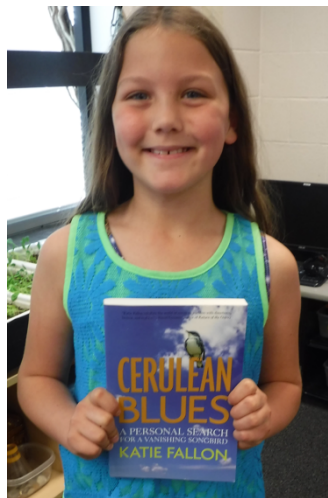
A Family Science Night to showcase the phenology work completed by Juniata Valley students was held in May with over 150 attendees from the Juniata Valley community. At Family Science Night, Laura Jackson, JVAS member and past president, and Susan Braun, JVAS member and field trip coordinator, directed an interactive migration activity called the Hummingbird Migration Station to help students understand the challenges that hummingbirds face on their long seasonal journeys.

Additionally, three books were donated by JVAS as prizes for the event, including two titles by this year's JVAS Annual Banquet speaker, Katie Fallon, *Cerulean Blues* and *Look, See the Bird!* Through these fiction, realistic fiction, and non-fiction texts, readers can learn about different aspects of bird migration. Proud winners of the books were Elijah Corbin, Tyson Adams, and Tanya Hartman.



Tyson Adams Won a book written by Katie Fallon.

To find out more about the APPLES program, check out <http://www.applesproject.org/> for more details on the important work teachers all over the United States are doing to help students learn about phenology at their schools. And don't forget to keep an eye out for the phenological changes you see nearby in your garden and yard, you might get a real surprise!



Mazzy Hartman accepted this book for her mother.



Elijah was the winner of a book about bird migration.



Laura Jackson (L) and Susan Braun (R) enjoyed playing the Hummingbird Migration Station Game with lots of students.



JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON
PO BOX 42
TYRONE, PA 16686-0042
Address Service Requested

Got Seed?



**Special Event: Tues., 9/25: 6pm - 8pm
Bird Feeding Program at Tyrone Milling**

Learn more about attracting a wider variety of birds to your feeders, the importance of feeding year round, and lots of beautiful bird photos!

Please RSVP to Tyrone Milling: 814-684-3400.



Support “our birds” on their wintering grounds by purchasing organic shade coffee from Honduras.

Cultivated by a small group of farmers in Maracala, Honduras, Lenca coffee is one of the best Arabica coffees in the world. Emilio Garcia and his family have been cultivating coffee since 1915; now they market their organic, shade coffee in the U.S. Freshly brewed Lenca coffee will be available free of charge at our JVAS monthly meetings; it’s low caffeine and contains undertones of chocolate and cardamom.

You can purchase bags of green coffee or medium roast coffee. Green coffee is \$6.00 per 1-pound bag. A 1-pound bag of medium roast ground, or whole bean, is \$12. A 2-pound bag of medium roast ground, or whole bean, is \$22. Coffee will be served at monthly meetings and will be available for purchase. Proceeds are used for bird conservation projects. You can order Honduran Marcala coffee directly from Ragged Edge: www.squareup.com/store/the-ragged-edge-roasting-co