

Gnatcatcher

 JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol 1 No. 4

November 1969

 Selected from "On the Naturalist Nature of Man" by Richard R. Graber

First and last, naturalists are conservationists. Life and all the things upon which life depends are the ultimate wealth, and the maximum production of life depends upon nothing more than long-term survival of the greatest number of species. This in turn, now seems to depend upon the knowledge and understanding of one species. The billions of living things of all species which could come after us on through the millenia can be sacrificed by these millions who are here now. Wouldn't this be the ultimate crime? - to use our intellect greedily to cross that imperceptible line to mass extinction? It is even conceivable that we have already crossed it. So little do we understand the ecology of earth that almost certainly we will not know when we have crossed the line toward extinction. What a grotesque irony it would be if billions of years of organic evolution produced an intellect with the potential to understand, only to have it be the most destructive force of all. For life is wondrous whether we think of it as a biochemical accident or as the product of a creator.

November Meeting

Our third fall meeting will be held Tuesday, November 25th at 7:30 P.M. in the Childrens' Theater, ground level of the Altoona Public Library. Al Burd will present a slide-lecture on Pennsylvania wildflowers. Many members will recall Al's work from early last spring when he first treated us to his beautiful flower portraits. Parking can be best had three or more blocks away from the library moving toward 17th street. During library hours it is quite difficult to get a place right next to the building. Be sure to lock all car doors wherever you are. Anyone who prefers to have something solid in the way of back support for his seat should be sure to get a chair along the top of the amphitheater. Refreshments will be served.

Christmas Bird Count

The executive committee has begun planning for a Christmas bird census to be held in lieu of our regular December meeting. This will be the 69th year that Audubon has undertaken a bird count in the United States. Mainly a local effort, the results go into a journal - Audubon Field Notes - valuable to professionals studying bird life, migration, etc. We hope to have this outing as a permanent project and for the first year have chosen Sinking Valley as the site. In an area 15 miles in circumference the different species are noted and the number of each recorded. Small groups will attempt to cover extensively the designated area within the time span of one day. The exact day has yet to be decided upon - it could be any day from December 20th (Sat) to January 1st (Thurs). We are especially interested in counting the horned larks in Sinking Valley. It would be very nice to end the day's jaunt by having a covered dish dinner - possibly in the valley somewhere. Any suggestions along these lines should be made at our November meeting. The December issue of the Gnatcatcher will have all the last minute details. Even if not interested in running about for birds one might enjoy a short tramp in early winter followed up with a hot meal.

Why Not A Great Books List For Nature?

Never in the history of man has so much attention been directed to man and his interrelations with the environment. Never has it been so necessary.

It has been my hope that one of the things Audubon could do locally is to cull this new mass of writings and prepare some sort of list-recommendations that would help bring books, magazine and pamphlet articles to our local attention. We could even make recommendations to the library for new books or old titles.

Perhaps each of us could turn in a list of the five books on nature, conservation that he feels is really worthwhile in this world. Then we could share this list with each other, noting those most mentioned, and this could be a start.

For example, applying this thought to myself, I came up with the following:

Sand County Almanac - Aldo Leopold
Science and Sanity - Barry Commoner
 "anything" - William Beebe
Silent Spring - Rachel Carson
Territorial Imperative - Thomas Ardrey

(Dallas Webb, ed.)

October Meeting

Our group is very fortunate in having among its members a goodly number of naturalist speakers - two of whom - Harold Yoder and Al Richardson - come most quickly to mind for their fine presentations last October 28th. Many thanks to them for their time and efforts in giving us that program.

Executive Committee Member Listing

Officers:

- John Hunter Orr, President; 54 Duff Drive, Altoona, Pa. 16602 943-5629
- Albert G. Richardson, Vice-president; Box 39, Sylvan Drive, Hollidaysburg, Pa. 16648 943-7640
- Mrs. Howard Glisson, Secretary; 307 E. Fairview Avenue, Altoona 16601 944-1442
- Jack Hancock, Treasurer; 2703 Broadway (Wenwood), Altoona, Pa. 16601 942-2020

Directors:

- Harold D. Yoder - 2803 Broadway Avenue (Wenwood), Altoona, Pa. 16601 942-4330
- Dallas Webb - RD #3, Box 188, Altoona, Pa. 16601 944-2159

Committee Chairmen:

- Field Trip: John T. McCall, RD #3, Box 326, Altoona, Pa. 16601 942-1227
- Finance: Jack Hancock (See Officers)
- Program: Albert G. Richardson (See Officers)
- Publications: Dallas Webb (See Directors)
- Social: Mrs. Jane Webb, RD #3, Box 188, Altoona, Pa. 16601 944-2159

Book Offer

A nice bargain at \$1.00 is Fundamentals of Ornithology by Josselyn Van Tyne and Andrew J. Berger. Dover is selling them in clearance at this savings of \$2.00 a book. There is only a limited number of copies available so if anyone is interested - contact your president at the coming meeting or by phone. The book deals with ornithology in some detail, totaling 624 pages. It was published in 1958.

Audubon Wildlife Films: State College

The State College Bird Club in conjunction with the National Audubon Society is currently presenting its fifth season of film-lectures. Tickets are \$1.00 for single admission and \$.50 for students' single admissions. Tuesday, December 9, Charles J. Stine will narrate his film "Land of the Drowned River". Mr. Stine is a last minute replacement for Charles T. Hotchkiss, and for that reason, we don't know more about his film. One may be sure, though, that it will be a gem. The lecturers and films are always of the highest quality.

Everything is in motion for our own series of films - 1970-1971 - a series of five, hopefully to be presented in the auditorium of the Altoona Area High School. On March 31, of the coming year, we will sponsor a film at the school. This is pretty well set up at this date. It will be a trial venture for us and hopefully a profitable one.

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Is it true that the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture is planning to ban all uses of DDT by the end of 1970?

The Not A Great Book List For Nature

Never in the history of man has so much attention been directed to nature and its intricacies with the environment. There have been many books written about nature and its various aspects. Some of these books are listed below. They are not great books, but they are interesting and informative. They are listed in alphabetical order of the author's name.

1. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians - John G. Collins

2. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Insects - John G. Collins

3. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Birds - John G. Collins

4. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Fishes - John G. Collins

5. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Mammals - John G. Collins

6. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians - John G. Collins

7. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Insects - John G. Collins

8. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Birds - John G. Collins

9. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Fishes - John G. Collins

10. The Audubon Society Field Guide to Mammals - John G. Collins