

# WATERBURY

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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## Stopping By Woods

### On A Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

- Robert Frost

## The Fifth Annual Christmas Bird Count

Our bird census - mad day of trekking - a mighty search over North and Central America by over 20,000 mad birdwatchers in groups small and large on a one-day outing - soon - this December 30th, a Sunday, foul or fair, fair or foul in a circle fifteen mile, the focal point at Culp in Sinking Valley near Altoona "mountain-city" of Central Pennsylvania, winter home of snow buntings, horned larks, ruffed grouse, rough legged hawks and whatnot.

If the snow holds we'll be in good for the ideal count weather is snow and clear sunny skies. Chambersburg went out Dec. 16 and brought back a new record: 74 species! The count period is Dec. 15th to Jan 1st. We can have one day for the big count and that is our Sunday after Christmas. "Did you know that early counts in America were done on Christmas day? A change this year permits to add species sighted only for the three days prior to and after the count day. (That is, Dec. 27th, 28th, 29th / Jan. 1st, 2nd & 3rd.). If you get out then and see a bird that we miss on the 30th it can be listed in the count in a special section of entry.

John Orr is the compiler. His job is to arrange the contacts and to set up the parties. Call him at 943-5629 if you want to go out. Some of the observers are crazy enough to spend the entire day - from dawn to dusk - in the field. Others stay home and watch it on T.V. Some want to get out for the beautiful winter drive that one can often find at this time of the year...a drive out to Sinking Valley to look for manure strips on snowy fields where lie - or hop - the buntings and larks. Binoculars are a must as are warm - really warm - clothes, a snack lunch (oatmeal cookies are almost a necessary field item and small batches homemade can be ordered from the compiler). Our territory is so big that we are hard put to handle it. Any people who live within the circle can help by being spotters or locators of birds. If a good bird is seen before the count day we have a chance of picking it up. Those who have feeders or who know someone with feeders can help - if it is in the area. The feeder is a great draw for winter birds.

Paul and Irene Luckner have invited us to come to their house as we did last year for the covered dish dinner and tally. This is a wonderful chance to learn about winter birds. We'll have guides, maps, field reports, etc., so - even if you don't get out as an active counter you can have a fine time at the dinner... which

is set for just after dusk. When it is too dark to see we head in for the tally. The Luckners live in Sinking Valley - coming from Altoona on the main road past the reservoir proceed on to the open valley and just before the Kiwanis sign blue you'll find their house which sits in off the road...on the left hand side.

There will be - of course - a special effort to get an owl: "an owl hike" - an event that has high aspirations but as of now little success. Going back to daylight activities: most of the area will be covered by combing all the roads by car with an eye for movement and spots where we can stop to travel off on foot. The 15 mile diameter circle takes in Bellwood, Tyrone, Spruce Creek (the bridge), Canoe Valley, Mt. Etna, Kettle Reservoir, parts of Scotch and Turkey Valleys and part of Greenwood.

Olga Orr will be handling the arrangements along with Irene Luckner and Margaret Chonko - that is, the arrangements for the covered dish dinner. Call Olga at 943-5629 to check in and say what you'll be bringing. We need different dishes: entrees, salads, desserts, relishes, breads, etc. Bring your "favorite dish". A small contribution could be made at the dinner if you prefer to come alone without your favorite dish. And that's all right too! The big thing is: come out for a good time.

A \$1.00 participation fee is charged those who actually count. All fees are payable in check to "American Birds" or in cash to John Orr.

#### Pre-Count Field Trip

This will be an orientation to the count. The destination is Canoe Valley and Canoe Creek State Park. Call 943-5629 to make connections for this trip to be held on December 23rd at 1:00 P.M. Afterwards we'll be gathering at John Orr's at 30C1 4th Avenue for hot chocolate, tea, coffee and cookies.

#### January Meeting - Special Note

A new meeting place has been procured: the 28th Street Church of the Brethren at 2800 Union Avenue. There is plenty of parking in their large lot. The program for the first month will be "Colonial Naturalists" - a color film presentation and a talk describing the lives and works of those naturalists. That's the 29th.

#### Bird Seed

Mary Slippey has - we believe - some of the special mix of seed available at a good price. John Orr has a few bags full. We'll try to have some of this seed at the count dinner.

#### Gifts / Memberships

A little late for reminders for Christmas but still: consider a gift membership. For birthday, graduations coming up or just for the sheer good gesture of friendship, buy a gift membership. National will send a beautiful card announcing it. Just write to New York - 950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

#### \*\*\*\* The Banquet \*\*\*\*

Our annual banquet is scheduled for February this year: the 26th. Mark the date so as to remember.

Elections of Officers -----At the January Meeting. Call in nominations or give names verbally to John H. Orr, Earl Higgins (our President), Margaret Chonko -- so we can work up the slate for that meeting.)