

# The Gnatcatcher

## Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

Vol. LI, No. 2 —March-April 2019

Published bimonthly (except for July and August)

as a benefit for members of the...

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



Hello everyone,

This upcoming April is going to be a big month for JVAS with two important events:

### **JVAS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Banquet: April 16**

On April 16, the annual banquet will be held at Jethro's restaurant. This year at the banquet, we will be celebrating the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** of our chapter. We are asking for an advance payment of \$20 by April 8<sup>th</sup> which reserves a seat and pays for your meal. In addition to our silent auction, we will be having a 50/50 raffle and selling JVAS insulated mugs with all proceeds going toward our organization. Our guest speaker this year will be Andy Mack. Many of you saw his riveting presentation last spring on the Cassowary populations in Papua New Guinea. We are very excited to have him back with us again for this special event.

### **Earth Week Birding Classic runs from April 21 – April 28**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Week Birding Classic will begin on the following Sunday after the banquet, April 21<sup>st</sup> at noon, and run through the 28<sup>th</sup> ending at noon. Donations for this event have started to roll in over the last month. As always, registration for all teams is free. The goal is for teams in seven different categories to count as many species of birds as possible over a chosen 24-hour period within the designated week. The non-profit event is co-sponsored by the Environmental Studies program at Penn State Altoona and JVAS. Pledges that team members garner will support bird conservation and education in central Pennsylvania. Teams of 3 or more (2 or more for Senior citizens) will count birds in Blair and surrounding counties. Lunch will be provided, and prizes awarded during the closing ceremony at the Slep Center on the Penn State Altoona campus immediately following the event. Registration deadline for this event is April 14<sup>th</sup> (to register and for more information regarding this event, please contact me at [catiegk5059@gmail.com](mailto:catiegk5059@gmail.com)).

Cheers,  
Catie

Join us for a  
special night  
On April 16th



Send Banquet payment (\$20 per person) by April 8: Make check payable to JVAS and send to: Laura Jackson

8621 Black Valley Road  
Everett, PA 15537

Register for the Earth Week Birding Classic before April 14 by emailing Catie Farr at [catiegk5059@gmail.com](mailto:catiegk5059@gmail.com)

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**, Catie Farr

- ♦ 570-651-3839
- ♦ catiegk5059@gmail.com

**Vice President**, Laura Jackson

- ♦ 814-652-9268
- ♦ jacksonlaura73@gmail.com

**Secretary**, Sharon Clewell

- ♦ 814-207-5387
- ♦ sclowellp@hotmail.com

**Treasurer**, George Mahon

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

**Immediate Past President**, Laura Jackson

- ♦ 814-652-9268
- ♦ [jacksonlaura73@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonlaura73@gmail.com)

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Membership**, Debra Grim

- ♦ 814-644-5285
- ♦ dsgrim02@gmail.com

**Conservation**, Laura Jackson

**Programs**, Laura Jackson

**Partners in Neotropical Bird Conservation**,

- ♦ Laura Jackson

**Education Committee**, Jake Vaughn

- ♦ 814-934-0018
- ♦ jrvbasshunter@gmail.com

**Field Trips Committee**, Susan Braun

- ♦ 814-574-0795
- ♦ braun3112@gmail.com

**Publications & Publicity Comm.**, Dave Bonta

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

**Hospitality Committee**, Catie Farr

- ♦ 570-651-3839
- ♦ catiegk5059@gmail.com

**Historian**, Mike Jackson

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

**Website Administrator**, Dave Bonta

- ♦ 814-686-7274
- ♦ [bontasaurus@yahoo.com](mailto:bontasaurus@yahoo.com)

**The Gnatcatcher Editor**

- ♦ Laura Jackson

#### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

- ♦ Warren Baker
- ♦ Marcia Bonta
- ♦ Kristin Joivell

## COLETTE HELLER IS 102!

- Marcia Bonta

Colette Heller, a longtime member and former president and vice president of JVAS back in the early 1980s, will be turning 102 on April 12, four days before our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet. Unfortunately, she will be unable to celebrate with us.



Colette joined JVAS early on and when our family joined, at the invitation of John Orr, back in 1978 for the Christmas Bird Count, Colette welcomed us warmly at our first meeting in 1979. Instantly, our whole family fell in love with her. She loves the natural world in addition to her great affection for humanity. We've all missed her since she moved to Ohio to live with her daughter Nancy's family. Still, they have taken good care of her and she has lived to see two great grandchildren mature. She's gone on many family vacations to the shore and has continued to watch the birds in Nancy's backyard.

She recently moved to a Memory Care Home close to Nancy's home. I hope that all of you who remember Colette will send her a card for her birthday. Nancy promises to put them in an album for Colette.

**Please write to Colette Heller**

c/o Parkside Village  
730 N. Spring Road  
Westerville, OH 43082



Photo by Mike Jackson

#### Ever wonder why our chapter newsletter is called *The Gnatcatcher*?

When John Orr, one of the founding fathers of JVAS, was young, he became very interested in birds and joined the Jr. Audubon Club. When he was in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade, a book called, "Blair County's First 100 Years" was published and in the chapter on birds, there was a reference to Blue-gray Gnatcatchers as being somewhat rare. John read this chapter and was delighted because he had seen a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. He called the author and told her about his find. Fast forward to 1969 when Juniata Valley Audubon Society was formed. John was the newsletter editor and wanted to choose a bird that was not an average yard bird. He thought the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was appropriate because the newsletter would "catch" the news and share it with the readers. That's how our newsletter became *The Gnatcatcher*. Thank you, John, for choosing such a wonderfully cute and fast little bird to represent our efforts to inform and educate our members.

## Juniata Valley Audubon Society 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday Evening Programs

Check our Facebook page for updates.

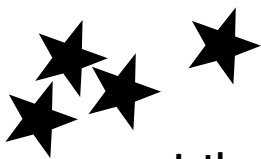
Our evening programs are designed for a general audience; all programs are free and open to the public. **A free dinner, including hot, shade-grown, organic coffee, starts at 6:00 PM, followed by the meeting at 6:45 PM.** We meet in the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA. Please join us!

**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 a short distance; the library is on your right.

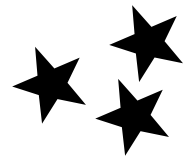
### **Tuesday March 19, 2019: Birding the Rio Grande Valley** by Susan Braun and Debra Grim

**A free dinner starts at 6 pm: stuffed cabbage rolls, rice, veggies, beans (gluten free and vegetarian), fruit tart, homemade frozen yogurt, hot shade coffee and juice.**

Susan Braun and Debra Grim will share highlights of their recent birding trip to the Rio Grande Valley. They will share photos and videos of birds, and describe the different National Wildlife Refuges, state parks and other natural areas they visited and highlight some of the flora and fauna.



### **Tuesday April 16, 2019: JVAS SPRING BANQUET & 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**



**Jethro's from 5 pm – 9 pm at 417 Parkview Lane, Altoona, PA 16601**

We will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of JVAS by honoring past officers and leaders; come early for the special reception from 5 – 6 pm. A buffet dinner starts at 6 pm, followed by a program by Andrew Mack. **Menu:** Salad & rolls, sliced grilled chicken, vegetables, baked potatoes, fresh-cut Jethro fries, gnocchi & meatballs. Non-alcoholic beverages included; alcoholic drinks extra. Most options are gluten free.

**The Buffet is \$20 per person. Mark your calendar - reserve by Monday, April 8. Make check payable to JVAS and mail to Laura Jackson, 8621 Black Valley Road, Everett, PA 15537 by Monday, April 8, or pay at the March 19 meeting.**

### **The Birds of New Guinea and Conservation Lessons for Everyone** presented by Andrew Mack

Andrew Mack lived and studied in Papua New Guinea (PNG) most of 1987-2007. Last spring, we heard him give a fascinating account of his research on cassowaries. This year, Andrew will present an overview of the birds of New Guinea, with particular attention to endemic specialties like Birds of Paradise, Bowerbirds, Berrypeckers, Cassowaries, etc. He will talk about the scientific lessons learned from New Guinea and biologists who have worked there, from Alfred Russel Wallace to Ernst Mayr to E.O. Wilson. Andrew will share conservation lessons he learned from working with the endemic birds and indigenous people whose cultures are intertwined with the natural world.

There will also be a **50/50 raffle** and a **silent auction** throughout the evening. Nature-related items that are new or gently used will be available for bid. Bring your donations to the March 19 meeting or bring to the Banquet.

**Tuesday May 21, 2019: Preventing Tick Bites and Tick-borne Diseases** by Amber Altiero, RN.

**A free dinner starts at 6 pm: taco bar, rice, beans, veggies, fruit and cinnamon chips and dip, hot shade coffee and juice.**



Originally funded by the PA Dept. of Health, Dare 2B Tick Aware uses the most current research available to help you prevent tick bites and how to get help if you do get Lyme Disease. PA leads the nation in new cases - don't be a statistic! Learn how to protect yourself and your family.



**Tuesday June 18, 2019: Maxine Leckvarcik Memorial Picnic 6 PM - 9 PM**  
**Canoe Creek State Park Pavilion #2 just off parking lot #6**

**Click here for a map:**

[http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr\\_004826.pdf](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_004826.pdf)

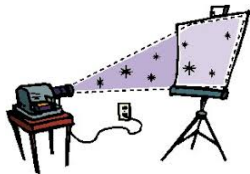
Our annual summer picnic has many eats and treats for all tastes and appetites! JVAS will provide grilled chicken for everyone. We hope everyone will bring a covered dish to share. Join us as we picnic together and celebrate another year of exploring and protecting nature in Central PA. After eating, we will have a nature walk from 7 to 8:15 PM. **Be sure to let Hospitality Chair Catie Farr know what you plan to bring. Call her at 570-651-3839 or email [catiegk5059@gmail.com](mailto:catiegk5059@gmail.com).** We will end the evening with an optional visit to the bat church around 8:30 PM to see Pennsylvania's only flying mammals - bats! These bats beat the odds of White-Nose Syndrome and their survival needs to be celebrated. We will stay until around 9:15 PM to see the bats.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS in 2019**

***Night at the movies: April 22 EARTH DAY***

***Cathedral: The Fight to Save the Ancient Hemlocks  
of Cook Forest***

April 22 from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Altoona Library in the Theater Room  
(easiest access is through the side entrance, lower level)  
Admission is FREE and light refreshments will be served.



### **Earth Week Birding Classic Sunday April 21 – Sunday April 28**

The **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Week Birding Classic** will be held from **April 21 to 28, 2019**.

Registration is free. The goal is for teams in seven different categories to count as many species of birds as possible over a 24-hour period any time during the week beginning on **April 21 at 12 noon and ending at 12 noon on April 28**. This non-profit event is

co-sponsored by the Environmental Studies program at Penn State Altoona and Juniata Valley Audubon Society. Pledges that team members garner will support bird conservation and education in central Pennsylvania. Teams of 3 or more (2 or more for Senior citizens) will count birds in Blair and surrounding

counties, and prizes will be awarded during the closing ceremony at the Slep Center on the Penn State Altoona campus immediately following the event at 1 pm. **Registration deadline is April 14. To register and for more information, please contact Catie Farr at [catiegk5059@gmail.com](mailto:catiegk5059@gmail.com).**





## **Saturday May 4, 2019 Central Pennsylvania Native Plant Festival**

Boal Mansion, 163A Boal Estate Drive, Boalsburg PA 16827

JVAS plans to have a display at this event - contact Laura Jackson if you'd like to help.

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### **JVAS Field Trips Spring 2019**

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

Check our Facebook page for updates or contact Susan.

#### **Saturday March 23: Chimney Rocks 1 pm – 4 pm**

Join Susan Braun and Sharon Clewell to visit this outstanding geologic formation in Hollidaysburg. It is an outcrop of fingerlike spires of limestone. The hike is less than a mile and offers breathtaking views of the Juniata Valley and Hollidaysburg. Afterwards, we'll visit nearby NatureWorksPark, and then head to the Allegheny Creamery for something to eat.

Meet at the Chimney Rocks Park, Chimney Rocks Road, Hollidaysburg, PA

<https://goo.gl/maps/2Uhy2TCARbP2>

Contact Susan Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 for information.

#### **Saturday March 30: Bedford Whitetail Wetlands Birding 8:30 am – 2 pm**

Meet at the Eat 2 Live Bistro (which is now closed) on Rt. 56 at 1634 Quaker Valley Rd, New Paris, PA 15554 at 8:30 am. We will carpool a short distance to the wetlands. The hike will last about 3 hours. Wear waterproof boots, bring binoculars, listen to the forecast, and dress accordingly. Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268. Optional Lunch at Slick's Ivy Stone 8785 William Penn Rd., Osterburg. Call Mike and Laura to confirm this trip, as we often have to cancel due to icy conditions.

#### **Saturday April 13: Trillium Hike 9 am – 12 pm**

Let's walk along the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River on the Lower Trail to look for spring wildflowers. If our timing is right, the slopes will be covered with red trillium and other spring ephemeral wildflowers such as Dutchman's breeches and bloodroot in bloom along the trail as we walk for an easy 3 to 4 miles. Bring snacks and water to enjoy along the way. Meet at Water Street Flea Market, RT 22 & Rt 453, Alexandria, Huntingdon County.

Contact: Susan Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 or Debra Grim [dsgrim02@gmail.com](mailto:dsgrim02@gmail.com) (814) 644-5285 for information.



**"WOW – so that's a Cerulean Warbler!"**  
JVAS has binoculars you can use on field trips, so you can enjoy the birds!  
Check with Susan Braun.





## More great field trips....

### **Saturday April 20: Birding the Bells Gap Rail Trail 8 am - 11 am**

Join John Carter and Mark Nale on an early spring warbler search on the Bells Gap Trail while enjoying outstanding views of eastern ridges, the Tuckahoe Valley and Bellwood Reservoir. We will stroll 2 miles of the trail that consist of fresh crushed limestone surface in search of Worm-eating, Cerulean, Hooded Warblers and hopefully many more. Along with the rich railroad history, the trail includes several covered benches on which to rest and enjoy the scenery.

What to bring: binoculars, comfortable walking shoes, drink and snack. After the walk we can gather at Nunzio's Pizza & Italian Rest. (across from Bellwood Sheetz) for a bite and discuss our observations.

#### **Meet at the Bell Gap Trailhead**

**Directions:** Take Bellwood Exit 41 off of I-99. Follow PA-865 for 2.7 miles to Igou Road which will be on your right. Go .1 mile on Igou Road. Turn left into Bells Gap trailhead parking lot. The trailhead parking lot includes picnic tables, picnic pavilion, and a portable toilet. Contact: Susan Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 for information.

### **Saturday April 27: Shaver's Creek Cabin Walk 1 pm – 5 pm**

Jennifer Baldwin will lead a field trip on the trails near her cabin in northern Huntingdon County. We'll walk part of the Ironstone Trail and finish at Jennifer's cabin for a potluck dinner.

Meet at the parking area at intersection of Route 26 and Charter Oak Road or park along Pine Swamp Road to walk to Jennifer's cabin. Trip Leader: Jennifer Baldwin <https://goo.gl/maps/qi78stcsvgLH2>

Contact: Susan Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 for information.

### **Saturday May 11: Migration Walk - Bullit Run to Lower Green's Run 7:30 am - 11:30 am**

Join Susan Braun for the PA Migration Count. We'll take a bird walk and count every bird we see or hear along a flat two mile walk from Bullit Run to Lower Green's Run in Bald Eagle State Park. Afterwards, we can head to the Kitchen Witch in Howard for a bite to eat.

Meet at the Lower Green's Run Parking lot in Bald Eagle State Park. We'll leave some cars there and shuttle to Bullit Run to begin our walk. <https://goo.gl/maps/zmj2n5Xn6Co>

Contact: Susan Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 for information.

### **Saturday May 18: Canoe Creek State Park 9 am – 1 pm**

We will walk the Limestone and Moore's Hill trails to admire wild phlox, trout lilies, yellow lady's-slippers, and other wonderful wildflowers. Bring lunch and water, be prepared for a hill climb and rocky trail. (You can also return along the Limestone trail without climbing the hill, and still see many flowers.)

Meet at Canoe Creek State Park, Blair County. Enter from Turkey Valley Road, passing the park office, and park in the large parking lot near the lake. <https://goo.gl/maps/Y35pAJRTHhK2> Contact Susan

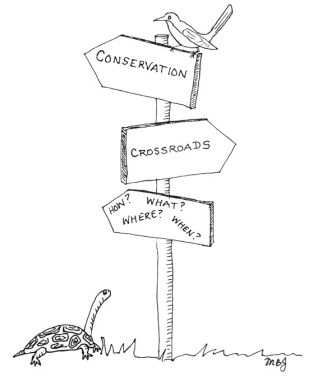
Braun [braun3112@gmail.com](mailto:braun3112@gmail.com) (814)574-0795 or Debra Grim [dsgrim02@gmail.com](mailto:dsgrim02@gmail.com) (814) 644-5285.

### **Saturday May 25: Warbler Walk at Mountain Meadows, Bedford Co. 8 am – 11 am**

Mike and Laura Jackson did a forest habitat project in the fall of 2014 for Golden-winged Warblers and other birds that need young forests for breeding habitat. Mike and Laura will lead us in search of Golden-winged, Kentucky, Hooded, and Cerulean Warblers, as well as Yellow-breasted Chat and other spring songsters. Bring lunch and water. Call 814-652-9268 or [jacksonlaura73@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonlaura73@gmail.com).

**Directions to 8621 Black Valley Road, Everett, PA:** From Bedford, take Rt. 30 E. to Everett, turn Right onto the West Bridge on W. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., then take an immediate Right on Black Valley Road. Follow Black Valley Road for 2.5 miles. You will pass a bright red/white barn very close to the road on the Right. Continue for another half-mile until you see a gravel lane on the Right. There is a sign that says, "The Jacksons'" at the beginning of the lane. After turning Right onto the lane, continue up the mountain for 1/2 mile, staying straight, until you come to the Jacksons' house.

**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](http://www.JVAS.org) Click on the Conservation tab.



### **Three species of bats receive state endangered species protection.**

In 2018, the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) completed bat gates at three sites: State Game Lands 51 in Fayette County, the Sabula Railway Tunnel in Clearfield County, and Huntingdon County's Indian Caverns, an historic bat hibernaculum recently protected through a partnership with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Additionally, the PGC added three cave bat species to Pennsylvania's Endangered Species List in January 2019: little brown bat, northern long-eared bat, and tri-colored bat. JVAS Conservation Chair Laura Jackson interviewed Greg Turner, who is a Wildlife Biologist with the Wildlife Diversity Division of the PGC and leads the Endangered and Nongame Mammals conservation program.

#### **Laura: When does the new bat listing go into effect?**

Greg: I believe it has to get published in the PA bulletin to be formalized. Data entry is now a priority and I am working with WPC/DCNR staff to get the data entered, get the matrix completed that tells the system what produces a "hit." I am hoping it will be live and producing hits in 6 months. They do formal updates quarterly...so it will fall on one of those dates.

#### **Laura: What is the new protection? How far back will you recognize the presence of these bats?**

Greg: We are going with 2013 to present. There were still a lot of little brown captures in the western part of the state in 2012 that likely were not killed by WNS until 2013-2014. Those numbers were still strong in 2012, declined by 50% in 2013, and were down about 95% in 2014. Those are ballpark guestimates, not derived factual numbers. We will have a 300-meter buffer around each hibernation site and each maternity site, and any project going into that buffer will produce a hit, and will result in consultation with our agency environmental review staff.

#### **Laura: Does the buffer extend around just the cave/mine opening or the cave/mine complex? I'm wondering because of Heller Caves and the large complex of tunnels. If the owner gets a permit from DEP to mine outside the buffer, wouldn't those operations affect the cave?**

Greg: The 300-meter buffer is around the opening, unless we know the cave system goes beyond that, then we will need to discuss how to handle that. The system would need to be mapped for that to occur. Heller is quite small, probably 250 meters to spare. We always try to have a blasting/destroying of site-consideration built in.

#### **Laura: What message would you like to relay to conservation-minded people...some of whom wrote letters to the PGC in support of the listing?**

Greg: I certainly thank the people who took the time to write in or attend in person to provide their comments! While these protections are geared to prevent development from causing unintentional harm, and that's a well-deserved step forward for the species, our focus must remain on the major threat, white-nose syndrome. For more info:

[www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/Wildlife-RelatedDiseases/WhiteNoseSyndrome/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/Wildlife-RelatedDiseases/WhiteNoseSyndrome/Pages/default.aspx)

## JVAS Officers 1969 – Present

-draft list compiled by JVAS Historian Mike Jackson

JVAS leaders will be recognized at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet. If you know any past members, please encourage them to attend. Details on page 3; reservations due no later than April 8.



### 1969 - 1972

President John Orr  
VP Al Richardson  
Secretary Gladys Glisson  
Treasurer Jack Hancock

### 1972 - 1974

President Earl Higgins  
VP Al Richardson  
Secretary Margaret Chonko  
Treasurer Truth Close

### 1974 - 1978

President Mike Chonko &  
Don Wharton (1975)  
VP Mary Slippey &  
Bill Rosevear (1976)  
Secretary Betsy Vogel &  
Claire White (1976)  
Treasurer Martha Sullivan

### 1978 - 1980

President Bill Rosevear  
VP Truth Close  
Secretary Anne Borland  
Treasurer Colette Heller

### 1980 - 1984

President Colette Heller &  
John Orr (1982)  
VP Truth Close &  
Wilson Kreitz (1982)  
Secretary Anne Borland  
Treasurer Madge Quick

### 1984 - 1988

President Marcia Bonta  
VP John Lennox  
Secretary Angeline Stout  
Treasurer Janet Neely

### 1988 - 1990

President Wilson Kreitz  
VP Dave Kyler  
Secretary Jana Atwell  
Treasurer Janet Neely

### 1990 - 1994

President David Kyler  
VP Bill King  
Secretary Gene Zielinski  
Treasurer Janet Neely

### 1994 - 1998

President Stan Kotala  
VP Bill King &  
Terry Wentz (1998)  
Secretary Gene Zielinski  
Treasurer Marge Hoyer

### 1998 - 2000

President Terry Wentz  
VP Charlie Hoyer  
Secretary Gene Zielinski  
Treasurer Marge Hoyer

### 2000 - 2004

President Charlie Hoyer  
VP Cindy Moore  
Secretary Gene Zielinski  
Treasurer Marge Hoyer

### 2004 - 2006

President Cindy Moore  
VP Dave Bonta  
Secretary Shirley Wagoner  
Treasurer Warren Baker

### 2006 - 2009

President Stan Kotala  
VP Dave Bonta  
Secretary Shirley Wagoner  
Treasurer Warren Baker

### 2009 - 2010

President Terry Wentz  
VP Dave Bonta  
Secretary Charlie Hoyer  
Treasurer Warren Baker

### 2010 - 2014

President Dave Bonta  
VP Laura Jackson  
Secretary Alice Kotala  
Treasurer Warren Baker

### 2014 - 2018

President Laura Jackson  
VP Mark Bonta  
Secretary Sharon Clewell  
Treasurer George Mahon

### 2018 - 2022

President Catie Farr  
VP Laura Jackson  
Secretary Sharon Clewell  
Treasurer George Mahon





## Poetry Corner

We all have moments that inspire us to transcribe our feelings – joy, hope, fear, despair, anticipation, gratitude... Whatever it is that pushes us to write is always better shared than kept in a dark box. Send your nature poetry to Laura Jackson for future issues of *The Gnatcatcher*.

The Trillium Hike is Saturday April 13 from 9 am to 12 pm. Why do we celebrate this wildflower every spring? You might find the answer in Dave Bonta's lyrical poem.

### ***Trillium erectum***

Wake-robin, red trillium,  
stinking Benjamin: a three-faced flower.  
It lives by subterfuge.

Its stem is really a scape,  
its leaves are really bracts,  
sessile, glabrous, cuneate  
or attenuate at the base,  
broadly ovate, with margins  
entire and acuminate apex.  
The rank-smelling, self-  
compatible flowers alternate  
petals with sepals, three of each,  
and six stamens ring the single,  
three-part pistil.

To us they are wake-robins,  
flushed with good cheer,  
but they tempt frustrated  
Calliphorid flies with the scent  
of a blood-red corpse,  
and get pollinated for nothing.  
Later they will lure ants  
with an edible bait, the elaiosome  
a fleshy appendage to the seed,  
itself inedible - designed  
to be discarded in the colony's  
rich compost, and there take root.  
So many masks!  
Will the real *Trillium erectum*  
please stand up?



The Lower Trail trilliums show a range of colors from dark red to yellow. Flowers may also be white and paler red.

- Photo by Laura Jackson

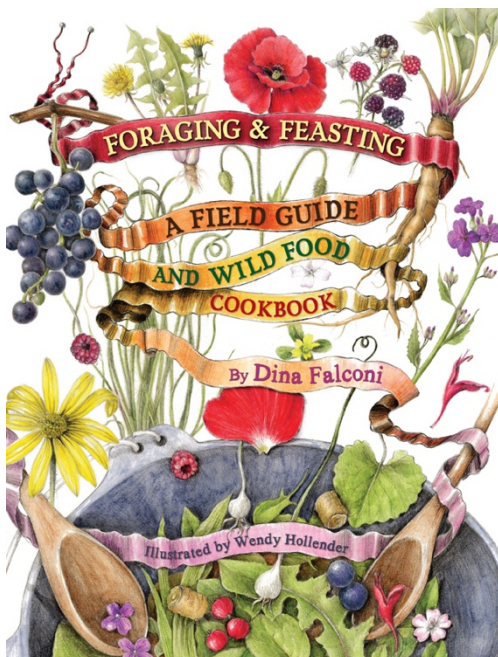


## Porcupine Pot Roast on a Platter, Anyone? by Mike Jackson, Historian

Colette Heller, a very active member of JVAS in the 1970's & 1980's, recently turned over a treasure trove of JVAS memorabilia that she saved all those years. This winter offered me a lot of "indoor time" to attack the materials with enthusiasm. One folder was of particular interest as it contained over 100 issues of *The Gnatcatcher*, many that we hadn't located previously. They will be scanned and added to the growing list of Gnatcatchers on the JVAS.org website. Just click on the hot link, JVAS Newsletter, and start enjoying the many activities that JVAS members shared dating back to 1969, when our organization was founded, by John Orr and a handful of like-minded conservationists.

This discovery was like finding a time capsule that contains just the information I was looking for to include in a booklet celebrating 50 years of JVAS activities. The celebration will take place on April 16, 2019 at Jethro's in Altoona.

While sifting through the old newsletters in search of interesting tidbits to share in the booklet, I came across a single sheet of paper with details about a JVAS Wild Foods Dinner that was held on June 22, 1980 at the Kiwanis Farm in Sinking Valley. I had read references to such a dinner in numerous newsletters, but never a mention about the succulent morsels that tickled their palates. Get ready to drool as you read the list of assorted delicacies: venison, rabbit, groundhog, squirrel, Eastern Hemlock tea, sassafras tea, violet blossom jam, rose petals in cake, elderberry blossom fritters, dandelion salad, lambs quarters (spiced & salad), watercress salad, amaranth/pigweed/redroot pickled, cattail stems, cattail blossoms, wild leeks (ramps), Indian cucumber root tubers, day lily tubers, fresh mulberries (white & purple), fresh wild strawberries, mulberry pie, blackberry pie, red raspberry pie, and roasted dandelion root drink.



If that didn't have you licking your lips, wait until you read about new suggestions for future wild food dinners...snapping turtle, rattlesnake, porcupine, four-and-twenty blackbirds baked in a pie (starlings), day lily blossoms, mushrooms (only morels or large puff balls), wild asparagus, pokeweed, chickweed, purslane, milkweed blossom buds, acorn bread, or acorn muffins.

The final words of wisdom stated, "Check out the books in the libraries for guides to collecting and preparing the wild edibles. It does take some measure of caution for some wild foods are poisonous."

Hopefully everyone was cautioned to remove the quills before sinking their teeth into a tender "porky" morsel. So, is it time for JVAS to revive the old tradition of dining on nature's delicacies, or should we just bury that idea along with a number of the dishes that left a bad taste in their mouths, oh, so many years ago?



## A Reminder to Renew Your Chapter-only Membership In *Juniata Valley Audubon Society*

**Membership Year runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>**

Your continued support will make a difference in our work to protect birds, their habitats, and the natural world we love. Even if you can't attend any of our activities, your membership provides important financial support. Please renew your Chapter-only membership in Juniata Valley Audubon Society.

### **Renewing members will continue to enjoy:**

- 5 issues of our newsletter, *The Gnatcatcher*
- Local birding and community events
- A voice in the fight to protect birds and their habitats

### **There are two ways to renew:**

1. You can renew using PayPal. Go to [www.jvas.org](http://www.jvas.org) and click on "Join or Renew" in the top menu. Scroll down for the membership options.
2. Detach or copy the rest of this page and return:

### **Become a JVAS Chapter-only member at one of the annual membership categories:**

#### **Check the appropriate box:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <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 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>**

Make your check payable to the **JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY or JVAS** and mail to:

Debra Grim, JVAS Membership Chair  
8844 Boonie Lane  
Petersburg, PA 16669

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

**JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON**

PO BOX 42

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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](http://www.squareup.com/store/the-ragged-edge-roasting-co) or purchase it at our monthly meetings.