

THE

# Gnatcatcher

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol 11 No 1

February 1979



## Birds at Winter Nightfall

Around the house the flakes fly faster,  
 And all the berries now are gone  
 From holly and cottoneaster  
 Around the house. The flakes fly! -- faster  
 Shutting indomitable that crumb-outcaster  
 We used to see on the lawn  
 Around the house. The flakes fly faster,  
 And all the berries now are gone!

- Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

### The February Program

DATE: February 27th - Tuesday

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: 28th St. Church of the Brethren  
 Union Ave. & 28th St., Altoona, Pa.

PROGRAM: ----- More Than Trees

A new Game Commission film on tree (arboreal) livers. A beautiful color film that has drawn high praise from those who have seen it.



### Best Bird Count Ever!

Twenty-three counters were afield Sunday, December 17th on our 10th annual Christmas Census. What could be worse than all-day rain? High winds. The windy weather was most discouraging - nothing came easy - and a final tally of species anywhere near our best of last year seemed not to be ---but - the final tallying by all field people gave us the day: 50 total different species on count day and 4 additional species not observed on the 17th but seen in the "count period," i.e., 3 days before or after the count day. This over-all total of 54 is 2 better than last year's 50 + 2. And - there is next year: the ever present challenge. More observers and better knowledge of species habitat will get our totals higher. The great goal is 60 and it can be done. For the period of 10 years our group has seen more than 75 different species. Some have been unusual but many are to be expected and it is this fact that allows us to predict the 60 or 65 future highs. Below is the final listing with the totals per species:

Mallard	99	Mourning Dove	25	Mockingbird	1
Black Duck	1	Kingfisher	5	Carolina Wren	3
Wood Duck	1	Red-Headed Woodpecker	1	Golden-Crowned Kinglet	1
Red-Tailed Hawk	6	Red-Bellied Woodpecker	6	Cedar Waxwing	38
Rough-Legged Hawk	2	Hairy Woodpecker	19	Evening Grosbeak	14
Marsh Hawk	3	Downy Woodpecker	40	House Finch	5
American Kestrel	10	Pileated Woodpecker	3	Starling	630
Accipiter (species)	1	Horned Lark	120	House Sparrow	217
Ruffed Grouse	4	Common Crow	204	Red-Winged Blackbird	13
Ring-Necked Pheasant	3	Blue Jay	23	Common Grackle	1
Turkey	8	Black-Capped Chickadee	62	Brown-Headed Cowbird	54
Killdeer	1	Tufted Titmouse	75	Catbird	2
Common Snipe	1	White-Breasted Nuthatch	51	Purple Finch	3
Rock Dove	150	American Robin	2	Goldfinch	73



Rufous-Sided Towhee	2	Seen in count period but not on count day:
Slate-Colored Junco	247	
Tree Sparrow	79	Great-Horned Owl
White-Crowned Sparrow	2	Screech Owl
Song Sparrow	21	American Coot
Cardinal	76	Scaup Duck (species)
Pine Eiskin	6	
White-Throated Sparrow	75	Total birds seen: 2,489

Most notable sightings include: rufous-sided towhees (John McCall & John Hancock), catbirds (1 @ Marcia & Stephen Bonta / Bill Rosevear), turkey (Dave Drew's party - 7 / Bill Murray - 1), and accipiter hawk (Coopers?/Sharp-Shinned?) (Lee McCartney - 1). The accipiter hawk and scaup duck are listed as "species" since it was not positively decided which of the two confusing birds was seen. The Greater and Lesser Scaups look alike as do the two accipiters.

A fine time was had again at the Skelp Grange Hall where counters tallied and all partook of a nice covered dish supper. In comparison, State College had 59 total species on December 17th. Birds they saw that we missed: Canada Goose, Ring-Necked Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, American Woodcock, Ring-billed Gull, Common Raven, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Eastern Bluebird, Ruby-Crowned Kinglet, and Swamp Sparrow. They are high on aquatic fowl and we just plain missed some easy ones! It would be nice to get together with State College and exchange information - especially on habitat expectations.

Connecticut Outdoor Ed Workshop - With the new emphasis on education now being made it is hoped one of our members will want to attend this week-end workshop in April. For details call Bill Rosevear right away at 1-674-5021 (collect).

Summer Audubon Workshop Scholarship Again, call or tell Bill if interested. Or, if you know a potential candidate. Our group sent Peggy Goodman to Greenwich last year for the one week session and it appears that this will be an annual project.

Bird Seed Sale A success. For the first time, we outdid ourselves and all got in on a good price for seed. We sold \$1,417 worth of seed and broke even. Next sale is planned for October of 1979.

Patch Contest The contest to get a JVAS patch is still on. Submit entries / designs to Bill Rosevear.

Bluebird Address For those interested in more information on bluebirds: write to - The North American Bluebird Society  
Box 6295  
Silver Spring, Maryland  
20906

Audubon Film-Lecture Series. A proposal was made at the Feb. 4th Executive Committee that a series of three films be shown at Ft. Roberdeau in June, July and August. If interested in working on this call Truth Close at 942-7886.

Conservation Hotline Mailing List Bill has a sheet for anyone to sign up for the new Audubon Society hotline. A great number of different areas are listed - one may choose the area of greatest concern and then receive updates, instructions, etc. as they actually occur. See Bill on this.

February Executive Committee Meeting. Bill, Truth, Ann, Fran, John Orr and Colette Heller met at Orrs to handle business. All executive meetings are open to all members who are interested.

The Gnatcatcher  
3001 4th Avenue  
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Note: February Meeting: 7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, the 27th.

Maple Sugaring: March 3rd through March 18th at Prince Gallitzin State Park. Call park office (1-674-3691) for group info. or by couples - Sat/Sun 12:00 to 5

Mrs. William J. Heller  
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