

THE

# Gnatcatcher

Vol 11 No. 6

October 1979

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Be like a bird, who  
 Halting in his flight  
 On limb too slight  
 Feels it give way beneath him,  
 Yet sings  
 Knowing he hath wings.



- Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

## October Meeting

DATE: October 30th

DAY: Tuesday

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Twenty-eighth Street Church of  
the Brethren / Union Ave. & 28th St.  
Altoona, Pa.

PROGRAM: "Wild America"

Bill Rosevear, our speaker for the October meeting, will present a new Audubon film - "Wild America" - to our group along with a commentary on the issues touched upon in the production. The film shows the need for wild areas in the U.S. Wild area as used in it refers to any area where plants and animals exist. A city's survival relating to these areas is depicted. Bill says that it's a film well done and thought provoking.

Refreshments will be served. For newcomers: our group meets the last Tuesday of each month September through June except for December when we have our annual Christmas bird count and covered dish supper. (Mark December 16th, a Sunday, on your calendar for that). Meetings are always in the basement social hall of the church, entrance and parking being at the back. The social hall is very adequate - a clean, welllighted place, as Hemingway might say. Anyone is welcome to attend any JVAS meeting or activity, member or not. The gatherings are informal and informative. Please consider attending.

## Field Trip to The Pulpit

On Saturday, October 13th eleven members and friends traveled down to the Pulpit at the top of the Tuscarora Mountain just off Rt. #30. It was a day to test the hardy for a sharp wind blew at us making it all the colder. Long underwear was the thing to have on - even two pairs would have not been overdoing it! In the face of these hostile elements 142 birds of prey were sighted from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Spotters recorded many different hawks, ospreys and vultures: red-tails, red-shouldered, kestrel, merlin (moved fast - shot by with the kestrel), cooper's, sharpies (lots of them), ospreys and a peregrine (not seen by any of our party to the point of positive identity). Also - a turkey-vulture migration was in motion. Ravens were seen and plenty of blue jays. Some local non-migrating red-tailed hawks were seen quite close-up. Some of the birds pass over fast and very high; the peregrine, for example was a doubtful call in some people's minds. All in all, a worthwhile trip - even though the teams counting on a regular basis have had 700 days thus far this fall. A sunny, breezy week-end much like the Saturday/Sunday of October 20th and 21st might be a lot better. This sight is close - 65 miles or so south of us. It is a place that our group will definitely return to. Anyone wanting directions to the Pulpit should call Al Burd at 943-0586. Those making the trip included: Bill Rosevear, John Orr, Fran Burgoon, Joe Bentivegna, Wilson and Teddi Kreitz and two of their neighbors, Truth Close, Al Burd, and Diane Casacia. An extra added attraction that day was the hang glider launch off of the stone walls of the pulpit. We saw one hang glider make a precarious takeoff in high winds. He went high and far up and down the ridge for over an hour and was the only flyer to attempt it while we were there. It's a most interesting sight to behold and at one moment it appeared that a red-tailed hawk dipped into him high up and away from our vantage point.

## BIRD SEED PICK-UP - OCTOBER 27th

seed at Imler's Agway on 6th Ave. out

All seed buyers with their orders already placed and checks in - please pick up the load bags into cars. If you want to help

for an hour or two, call John Orr at 943-5629. Please pick up your seed orders within the hours of 9:00 to 3:00. The seed sale might be termed a slight success. To those on the Seed Sale Committee, the service offered is most important - the money made in profits comes second. Bill Rosevear will soon have a tally on exact monies but at this point it looks like \$200 - \$300 or so net profits. The November issue of the newsletter will give a fuller account.

### Bird Banding Nets

Bill Rosevear, our president, gave an informative talk on banding birds at the September Kiwanis Farm meeting. Our immediate goal is to attain certification necessary for placing our bands on birds in local studies. Also, with the new mesh nets JVAS can satisfy a need right away in the cases where a bird needs to be removed from a store or other building. A particular type of bird might need help in a similar way. For example, at this moment we are watching a case where a light blue parakeet is frequenting a feeder in the Pinecroft area. It might be necessary to make a capture for this bird's benefit, his survival, over the winter. When problems of trapped or endangered birds arise, call us.

### Bird Feeders For Sale

On October 27th at Imler's a good selection of feeders will be on hand for inspection and purchase. We have the Droll Yankee regular and thistle feeders as well as suet, peanut butter and glass sided station type devices. They may be bought there.

### JVAS Constitution Passed

For some time, at least, our organization will have a very good constitution to follow, as most members are aware now that 150 + have been distributed. The document was long overdue in a revised form, and thanks to Bill Rosevear it is now a reality. Anyone needing a copy should write to the Gnatcatcher. Thanks are due to all members who took time to consider the changes proposed and vote on the revision. It took two-thirds of the entire membership to ratify the new constitution but we finally got that number. (The new document has avoided that troublesome amending problem.)

### "A Bit of History on the Pulpit"

(The following is extracted from a short piece written by Laton E. Goldthwaite and found in Naturally (Oct. 1979), the newsletter of the Conococheague Audubon Society (Chambersburg, Pa.))

"Pulpiters" especially will be interested in the following letter:

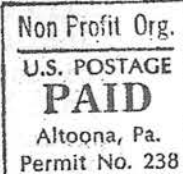
"On our return from Greece a little more than a month ago (May 1979), my wife and I took two house guests from Fairhope, Alabama, to visit the 'Pulpit.' While there we met a man and a woman who introduced themselves as Mr. & Mrs. Jim Johns, of Greensboro, N.C. It was her first visit to the spot, but for Mr. Johns it was a return after many years.

"Jim Johns said that he had contracted malaria during World War II and had been advised by his physician to recuperate in a cooler climate and at a higher elevation. Subsequently he got a job with Sid Leach at the old Tuscarora Mountain house.

"While there, Johns met Bob Hill, of Mercersburg, and Don Carbaugh, of McCormellssburg, and the three of them decided to build the lookout and observation post we now know as 'the Pulpit'. They hauled all the rocks, sand, cement and water by hand up the steep incline; the flat stones facing the north-east wall came from the old fire-place in the mountain house. Johns said this was in 1945 and he did not return after that summer, and lost contact with Hill and Carbaugh."

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