

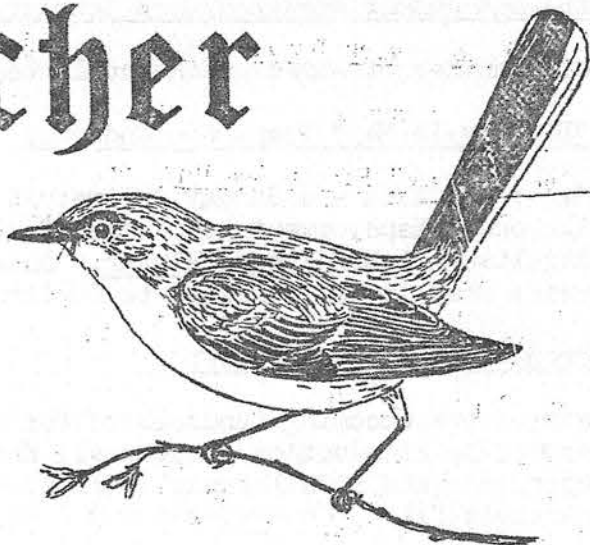
THE Gnatcatcher

JUNIATA VALLEY

AUDUBON SOCIETY

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At Midnight's Hour I raised My Head

At midnight's hour I raised my head,
The owls were seeking for their bread;
The foxes barked impatient still,
At their wan fate they bear so ill. --
I thought me of eternities delayed
And of commands but half obeyed. --
The night wind rustled through the glade
As if a force of men there staid;
The word was whispered through the ranks
And every hero seized his lance;
The word was whispered through the ranks,
Advance.

- Henry David Thoreau

Editor's Note: The Gnatcatcher apologizes for inadvertently omitting the name of last month's author. The author of the poem "I'm Nobody! Who Are You?" was Emily Dickinson - one of our favorites.

The April Meeting / Banquet TIME: 6:30 p.m. (Come a little early to talk if you wish)

DATE: April 28th (Tuesday)

PROGRAM: Tom Thwaites / Fifty Hikes In Central Pennsylvania

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

Tom Thwaites will present a slide show on his work titled Fifty Hikes In Central Pennsylvania. Hikes of interest to the beginner and veteran backpacker will be described. The author has a great store of knowledge on his subject and has walked all fifty of his guide's trails. He has scouted, cleared, blazed, and maintained many of them. Mr. Thwaites is a professor of physics at Penn State. His other outdoor activities include canoeing, cross-country skiing, and photography.

Reservations should have been made by now. (Madge Quick - 742-8719)
Checks should be mailed in to her before the banquet: 604 Martin Blvd./ Bellwood, Pa. 16617.

May 2nd Bus Outing to Pittsburgh and Raccoon Creek State Park There may be a few seats left on the bus. Call Madge Quick if interested. \$13.00/person. Leave at 7:00 a.m. from Pleasant Valley Shopping Center parking lot (at Sylvania end). Bring a bag lunch to eat at the park picnic area. Bring rain gear - just in case! This might include raincoat, good shoes (or extra shoes), umbrella, good rain hat. Good to be prepared! Warm clothes, too, would be a good idea. For those who did not get signed up in time for this outing, there are more such trips to come! The bus will leave for Altoona at approximately 5:00 p.m. (Call Al Burd at 943-0586 for more information)

April 25th Wildflower Walk One of the mini-trips set up this year by our program committee, this woodland walk will be at Louise Magees. A meeting place for those going has been set up at Pleasant Valley Shopping Center's Family Host Cafeteria. Meet at 2:00 p.m. This will be a guided walk with the aim of finding early spring wildflowers. Call Al Burd (943-0586) or Truth Close (942-7886) for more details.

Of Robin's Nests and Hair-birds A call recently asked for advice in handling robin's eggs. A nest had been taken down from a porch with the intent of ridding the property of starlings. Upon identifying the eggs as those of the robin, a not uncommon scenario unfolded: eggs go inside for warm keeping; call for help is made; advice is put nest back up where it had been; ending is no robins come back; moral: a nest in the hand is not worth too much.

The chippies are making ready to nest. Angeline Stout reports that our winter resident now has a companion and all eyes will now be on nest building. Horsehair is preferred for the inner lining, thus the name sometimes given to the chipping sparrow: hair-bird. Our winter chippie has more vibrant colors now says Angeline. The buffy eye-stripe is turning whiter. More later.

Audubon Summer Workshop/Camp Scholarship Notify president, Colette Heller, if you are interested or know someone who might be. Any of a number of summer weeks could be selected for this outdoor education experience.

"Big Day in May" Plans Now Underway Contact John Orr or Bill Rosevear if interested in a one day count for total different species.
Date: May 17th - a Sunday. Time: 24 hours. Place: 25 mile radius from center of Altoona. Maps, exact boundaries forthcoming. Simply keep accurate of all birds seen. Results will be Altoona Mirror. This year's census expands its coverage from former years when it was confined to Christmas Bird Count circle.

Project Osprey Fundraiser Help bring baby ospreys to Pennsylvania! Chip in with a dollar or so. Plus: support any of the upcoming fundraisers for this project. Goal of this effort is to see the osprey reintroduction a success. East Stroudsburg State College is in charge of the operation and a fall Juniata Valley Audubon program will feature the bird in a most remarkable film. We are matching 1 to-1 up to \$200 in the drive.

Fort Roberdeau Trail Brochures - Help Needed! See Al Burd at the banquet Tuesday if you can help hand letter some minor adjustments to the newly run trail brochures. It is not much of a job if 10 or 15 of us lend a hand.

Wild Foods Dinner: June 23rd / Sunday / 2:00 p.m. / Fort Roberdeau Nature Center.

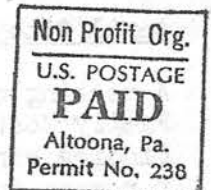
Please Note: the wild foods dinner date was changed from the day incorrectly listed in the JVAS program brochure. Cross out June 23rd on your blue programs.

Fort Roberdeau Trails Now is a nice time to get out to Sinking Valley for a leisurely stroll along the fine nature trails. Look for early spring wildflowers. Check out Al Burd's sign. Also: if you know any teachers who might want to go sometime to the park and nature center, get some of our guides to them. Get Al Burd in touch with them.

"Little Sanctuaries" Inventory A call is out now for information (details) on any little gems of habitat out there. For example: Arch Springs, Chimney Rocks, to name two very well known small sites. Another example: the sink hole cave in Sinking Valley called Cave Tytoona (half way between Tyrone and Altoona) (?) It is a beautiful precarious site with notable flora. Make up lists with identifying details and send them or give them to John Orr (3001 4th Ave. Altoona, Pa.) We are compiling data along these lines for inclusion in the Pa. Audubon Council fall meeting. We will be on the agenda with the topic: "Little Sanctuaries" Ultimate purpose: how best to inventory these precious bits of land with the aim of protecting them.

Endangered Species / Breeding Birds of Pa. Information More information is needed on birds nesting in our area. If interested in observing contact John Orr or Bill Rosevear. For example: the osprey is thought to not nest in our state (if it does it is rare). Watch this summer for these birds - perhaps at Lake Raystown. Report any sighting to Orr or Rosevear (John or Bill). More formal analysis of breeding birds is possible and can be done with precision by following guidelines available to us.

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