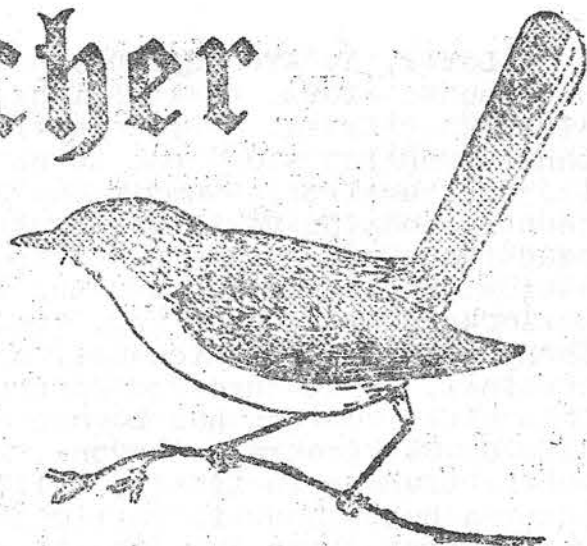


THE Gnatcatcher

JUNIATA VALLEY

AUDUBON SOCIETY



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Muse, bid the Morn awake!
Sad Winter now declines,
Each bird doth chose a mate;
This day's Saint Valentine's.
For that good bishop's sake
Get up and let us see
What beauty it shall be
That Fortune us assigns.

Michael Drayton

January Meeting January 25 at 7:30 at the 28th Street Church of the Brethern. Once again it's members' night. Plan to share your photography, collections, needlework, art work, writing, wood carving, etc. Call Wilson Kreitz (695-0126) to schedule your presentation. Those of you who attended last year's members' night know how special this is. Those of you who missed last year's should make a special effort to attend this year. We have some very talented people in our chapter.

Hearing Held On January 12, 1983 fourteen members of JVAS attended a public hearing on the Mill Run petition. Several members presented testimony urging the Environmental Quality Board to accept the petition (as DER's technical review had recommended). The EQB has 60 days from the date of the hearing to make its decision. A copy of DER's technical review will be available at the January meeting.

The Year of the Eagle Four Bald Eagles were recently killed in Pennsylvania. Audubon chapters from across the state are contributing to a fund which will provide a reward for information leading to the conviction of the responsible person.

Bluebirds Start looking for bluebirds. Paula Cameron reports seeing one last year on St. Valentine's Day at Huntingdon Furnace. "Since early colonial times in the United States, the bluebird has probably been cherished more than any other bird for its beauty, its song, and its appealing nature. It always has been a symbol of love and happiness and, in the north, the true harbinger of spring. The bluebird has been mentioned more often than any other bird in American poetry and in the lyrics of our popular songs. Yet, today, few people under 30 years of age have ever seen a bluebird." Lawrence Zeleny. (Yes, Paula is over 30!)

Sinking Valley Winter Bird Walk At a few minutes past 1:00 on Monday, January 18th 7 members

One Winter Day's Birding in Sinking Valley When if ever come perfect days? In January, of course when it comes to finding winter birds in a snowy setting. In recent years Audubon members have gone out for what is there. It is only by making the move - going for it - that one gets anything anyway. Those birds are out there. Horned larks do exist - on this day's outing an estimated 400 were sighted! So, on January 16th of last week Jesse Perry, Carol Showalter, Angeline Stout, Wilson and Teddie Kreitz Rachel Chipperfield and John Orr met up with Walter, Looise and Suzy Braun at Sickle's Corner at a little past 2:00. The ten of them in 3 cars proceeded down the valley to Culp, the center of the Christmas Count circle. Making a stop just left of the Culp intersection, at the Good's farm, a common snipe was seen feeding in a stream. Also sighted there in the water were 2 killdeers and a small flock of 20 or so brown-headed cowbirds...plus 1 mockingbird! Off to a good start the group went on to rack up 24 different species in three hours' time. The horned larks performed beautifully in their group flights near Skelp and later near Hileman's farm. No snow buntings, though. On the Cave Tytoona road a red-tailed hawk and an unidentified accipiter were seen.

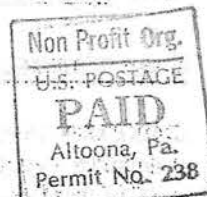
Later, at Arch Spring, a Carolina wren sang away as it sat openly on a sumac clump. A kingfisher sounded its call and flew back and forth along the stream. 2 song sparrows appeared briefly along the stream bank. Pushing along one turns up the birds. They are there to be seen. It just requires a commitment on the birder's part to get out into the country looking for these great things! The quick eyes of 10 birders caught one cedar waxwing eating berries along a road. Half an hour's patient searching located the little golden-crowned kinglets in the hemlocks near Arch Spring. Other species seen on this day were: kestrel, downy woodpecker, chickadee, nuthatch, starling, house sparrow, junco, cardinal, white-throated sparrow, tree sparrow, mourning dove, rock dove. This winter outing has become an annual affair carried as a scheduled date on our program. Anyone, however, may partake of the pleasures of winter birding in Sinking Valley just by taking a winter drive. Right after a heavy snow is particularly nice. It is a most beautiful valley, not just for birds but for all the eye can see in winter.

14th Annual Christmas Bird Count 36 observers in 15 parties and with 6 feeder counters put in a good day's work in tallying 55 different birds on Saturday, December 18th. The total overall number was 5,206! Also, the bobwhite quail was seen the day after the count but still within the 7 day count period. Not our highest count. That was in 1980 when we hit 61 different birds. Last year was 57. Some good birds were seen: Steve Bonta and Janet DeMuth saw separately 2 hermit thrushes each. Lee McCartney saw a yellow-bellied sapsucker. Jack Troy sighted a barred owl and 15 turkey. Three groups saw bluebirds. It was a good day but did not meet the natural expectations of the counters who see 60+ as "good." The covered dish supper at the Skelp Grange Hall was again a success with 40 and more attending.

The following is a list of species sighted:

mallard 102	yellow-bellied sapsucker 1	
accipiter, sp. 1	hairy woodpecker 23	
red-tailed hawk 6	downy woodpecker 106	
marsh hawk 2	horned lark 190	
American kestrel 12	blue jay 41	
reuffed grouse 13	common crow 149	
pheasant 1	chickadee 371	
turkey 15	tufted titmouse 165	
coot 1	white-breasted nuthatch 163	
Killdeer 1	brown creeper 5	brown-headed cowbird 7
rockdove 446	winter wren 1	cardinal 245
mourning dove 225	Carolina wren 7	evening grosbeak 12
screech owl 1	mockingbird 17	purple finch 43
great-horned owl 4	American robin 127	house finch 196
barred owl 1	hermit thrush 4	pine siskin 16
kingfisher 8	eastern bluebird 14	goldfinch 223
flicker 6	golden-crowned kinglet 4	towhee 1
pileated woodpecker 7	ruby-crowned kinglet 1	junco 509
red-bellied woodpecker 8	cedar waxwing 28	tree sparrow 217
	starling 649	song sparrow 63
	yellow-rumped warbler 10	
	house sparrow 587	
	red-winged blackbird 30	
	common grackle 1	

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