

G N A T C A T C H E R

 JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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The Panther

Jardin Des Plantes, Paris

His sight from ever gazing through the bars
has grown so blunt that it sees nothing more.
It seems to him that thousands of bars are
before him, and behind them nothing merely.

The easy motion of his supple stride,
which turns about the very smallest circle,
is like a dance of strength about a center
in which a mighty will stands stupefied.

Only sometimes when the pupil's film
soundlessly opens... then one image fills
and glides through the quiet tension of the limbs
into the heart and ceases and is still.

- Rainer Maria Rilke

The May Meeting: Iron Works

TIME: 7:30 A.M. DATE: May 27th PLACE: 28th St. Church of the Brethren
Altoona, Pa. - 28th St. & Union Ave.

PROGRAM: Slide presentation on Mt. Etna Iron Works

John Hunter Orr will speak on the topic of iron furnaces or works in Blair County. Major emphasis will be on Mt. Etna which just recently lost its front. Do you know what iron furnaces still remain intact in our county? Do you know what furnace also lost its front this spring? Learn of the double disaster at this program. See what has happened and is happening to our great historical sites. Perhaps members of JVAS will be able to contribute to an effort to save these crumbling monuments of 18th century industry. It is hoped that members will add their own commentary in an informal discussion of the county's iron works.

Bluebirds - Notes

The small and seldom seen (?) and perhaps - in some people's minds - the mythical blue grey gnatcatcher (!) does not get much publicity or aid from the Audubon Housing Authority. True, John McCall feeds them special imported gnats, but it is the bluebirds that are being helped the most lately. Bill Rosevear reports that he has a nice family of four babies up at Glendale. Fran Burgoon and a group of young people that he works with at the Hollidaysburg YMCA put out a number of houses at the Scotch Valley golf course. Charlie Walton is a bluebird house builder. He is so adept at this type of construction that his last house ran off the scale of the ordinary - he moved in it himself and is happy. Rumors are flying that the paper you now are reading may be taken over by a bunch of bluebird bandit revolutionaries whose main goal seems to be to make a change in the letterhead, so if you notice a bluebird and a title change soon you will know what happened! But - another rumor - some members are hand weaving small gnatcatcher nests for distribution in far and remote points of county.

Wild Foods Dinner in June

We will meet at 2:00 P.M. Sunday, June 24th for a field trip in search of wild edible foods. A site has not yet been chosen. Watch the papers and the June Gnatcatcher for the specifics. Besides looking for foods we will bring to the dinner a favorite item or two to share. Think now of what wild foods you might be able to gather and keep for late June. Some things could be frozen until then. Try the library for books - guides - that will give you ideas. Learning about wild edibles is fun as well as very educational. Call Al Burd for help in your pre-planning for the banquet. Everyone can come up with something if they will try. Bring your friends and bring regular dishes of the covered dish type so all will be well fed at this outing. Regular here would be hamburgers, hotdogs, salads, etc. This is a first for us. The outdoor wild foods dinners are quite enjoyable and most people are surprised just what kind of a meal can be put together from such fare.

Audubon Camp Scholarships Proposal

After much consideration it has been decided at the May executive committee meeting that a proposal should be made at the Tuesday meeting recommending scholarship aid be given to a member of our area - preferably to a person who works with education in any capacity - for the one week Audubon camp in Connecticut. After eight years of giving it thought - that is, talking about it - it now seems time to allocate the money in sending one of our local teachers to such a camp. Such a project is listed as one of those we can do to satisfy our status as a local branch of National Audubon. The impact of having a person return with the valuable skills in outdoor education that these camps impart is great in potential and well worth the funds expended.

The film Fund: An Appeal

Please send your contributions for the new Audubon film to Mike Chonko at 2316 11th St., Altoona, Pa. So far we have \$40. The purchase price is \$100. The name of the film is "It Began With Birds".

"Big Day" in May Count

For the first time our group sent teams out in the count circle for a spring count. May 11th saw John Orr, Mike and Margaret Chonko, Bill Murray, Mrs. Lee M Cartney, Al Burd, Don Wharton and Mary Slippey and her husband out counting migrating birds.

The following were seen: common loon, green heron, mallard duck, wood duck, turkey vulture, American kestrel, unidentified buteo, bobwhite, killdeer, rock dove, mourning dove, screech owl, great horned owl, common nighthawk, chimney swift, ruby-throated hummingbird, belted kingfisher, common flicker, pileated woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, hairy woodpecker, downy woodpecker, great crested flycatcher, eastern phoebe, eastern wood pewee, horned lark, tree swallow, barn swallow, cliff swallow, blue jay, common crow, black-capped chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, house wren, winter wren, carolina wren, gray catbird, brown thrasher, American robin, wood thrush, eastern bluebird, blue-grey gnatcatcher (!), common starling, red-eyed vireo, black and white warbler, worm-eating warbler, yellow warbler, myrtle warbler, black-throated green warbler, pine warbler, common yellowthroat, ovenbird, Louisiana waterthrush, hooded warbler, canada warbler, American redstart, house sparrow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark, red-winged blackbird, baltimore oriole, common grackle, brown-headed cowbird, scarlet tanager, common cardinal, rose-breasted grosbeak, indigo bunting, purple finch, American goldfinch, rufous-sided towhee, chipping sparrow, white-throated sparrow, song sparrow and field sparrow. A few missed: white-crowned sparrow, ruffed grouse and an unidentified sparrow (different from species listed above)

Count them. Not as high as we should get - 100 is a good goal to shoot for. 100 or more is what our group is capable of reporting on a single day.

Miscellaneous Notes

Consider writing or sending telegrams to senators and representatives regarding the confirmation of Mr. Hathaway to be head of the Dept. of the Interior. Audubon and many other groups and people oppose his confirmation.

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