

THE

# GNATCATCHER



JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vol 8 No 2

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## English Sparrows

(Washington Square)

How sweet the sound in the city an hour before sunrise,  
When the park is empty and grey and the light clear and so lovely  
I must sit on the floor before my open window for an hour with  
my arms on the sill  
And my cheek on my arm, watching the spring sky's  
Soft suffusion from the roofed horizon upward with palest rose,  
Doting on the charming sight with eyes  
Open, eyes closed;  
Breathing with quiet pleasure the cool air cleansed by the night,  
lacking all will  
To let such happiness go, nor thinking the least thing ill  
In me for such indulgence, pleased with the day and with myself.  
How sweet  
The noisy chirping of the urchin sparrows from crevice and shelf  
Under my window, and from down there in the street,  
Announcing the advance of the roaring competitive day with city  
bird-song.

- Edna St. Vincent Millay

### The Annual Banquet

Dr. Richard Martyr will be our quest speaker at the February banquet. He is our Mid-Atlantic States Field Representative and will present for us a slide program on Alaska's public lands. Dr. Martyr was born in San Francisco in 1947, attended The University of California where he received a B.A. in zoology in 1969, and was awarded with a Ph. D in bio-chemistry in 1974 at the same university. He joined the National Audubon Society in June 1974 as Assistant Western Regional Representative and in May of 1975 became the Mid-Atlantic States representative.

The banquet is a special annual event for us. Many people attend for the fine home style cooking and the good company. A fine program adds to these two to make it a most interesting, educational and entertaining evening! Please make your reservations now with Martha Sullivan at 1008 Allegheny St., Hollidaysburg (695-0052) or Margaret Chonko at 2316 11th St., Altoona, Pa. (942-8070). The final deadline for getting tickets is this Saturday, February 21st. (The cooks need to know in advance how many will be present.) Send in your checks: \$3.50 per person - to either of the above people. As usual anybody may attend. If you haven't been to any meetings please feel welcome to attend this or any Audubon affair. There is nothing formal in our gatherings. Bring your friends! It is possible to call in a reservation but those who do are responsible for covering the costs if unable to be at the banquet.

TIME: 6:30 P.M.  
DATE: February 24th - Tuesday

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

The menu is: braised steak with gravy / potatoes / green beans / jello salad /  
bread / beverage / & homemade pie

Remember: call now for the cut-off is Sat. February 21st.

### Winter Sightings

John Orr saw 2 hairy woodpeckers at his place Feb 7th. Also - he had 20 house finches at the feeders. Bill Rosevear reports 5 or 6 bluebirds staying over at the Prince Gallitzin State Park. This is unusual. Bill Murray has ruffed grouse coming into his yard to feed as does Martha Sullivan in Hollidaysburg. She is feeding her grouse apples.

Upcoming Programs

March 30th: Bill Anslinger - "Arnold's Larch to Quebec"

April 27th: Nick Miscovsky - "The Energy Problem"

May 25th: "Endangered Species"

June 27th - Wild Foods Outing. This is a combination field trip/meeting.

The June 27th affair is a good outing for wild edible foods. Plan for it now by reading up on the subject and by getting early spring foods to be dried or frozen. A lot of items must be collected in advance for the June banquet.

Projected Field Trips

Feb. 29th: Sunday - Birding at Canoe Creek State Park. Meet at 1:00 P.M. at Bob's Cradle Restaurant located on Rt. #22 in Canoe Creek.

Call Al Burd at 943-0686 for more details.

April 4th: Waterfowl on local reservoirs, rivers and lakes.

May 2nd: Spring Count. The big day in May. A Sunday outing to count as many birds as possible in the Christmas Count circle.

May 16th: "Bluebird Expedition" Trip led by Bill Rosevear to observe boxes, nests, young.

Miscellaneous Notes

The Executive Committee will meet at John Orr's house: 3001 4th Ave. Altoona. (7:30) March 19th (Friday)

The telechain is working. We need feedback, though, to know just how well. Call Olga Orr with comments (943-5629) or let her know at the meetings. People who want on the chain should let her know. If you pick up a person on your list to call please let her know about him or her. This means of communicating is to be used only for important items of business.

The Gnatcatcher seems to be getting out to Hollidaysburg late. Let John Orr know of any late mailings or other odd problems in delivery. We want to monitor the mailings and need your help.

Anyone interested in a spring salamander count contact Don Wharton. Audubon is cooperating with a study of the spotted salamander's spring migrations!

See Bill Rosevear if interested in getting out on the bluebird trails. This spring the houses will be set out in Sinking Valley. It is important to plan and act early for these birds come in soon. People are needed to monitor and maintain box houses.

Keep your records of birds seen - or not seen - for the American Birds census report. Don Wharton should get the information. He is in charge of reporting to regional head of our area. The current reporting period ends April 15th.

Note for your "gifts for graduates list" the student membership in Audubon. It is just \$7.00 and is ideal for a young person with a conservation interest.

In Memoriam

We are most saddened by the passing away of Al Burd's wife Ruth. She died January 27th. She and Al have a daughter - Jo Ann and two grandchildren - Tommy and Carol. Ruth was a tremendous seamstress and an expert at crocheting. She shared Al's interest in wildflowers and his many other hobbies.

The Gnatcatcher  
3001 4th Avenue  
Altoona, Pa. 16602

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Bill Rosevear  
405 Beech Ave.  
2nd Floor  
Patton, Pa. 16668