

THE

# GNATCATCHER



BLUE GRAY GNATCATCHER

Vol 8 No 8

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

September 1976



AMERICAN EGRET

W.E.R.

## SONG OF MYSELF

XXXI

I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars,  
 And the pismire is equally perfect, and a grain of sand, and the egg of the wren,  
 And the tree-toad is a chef-d'oeuvre for the highest,  
 And the running blackberry would adorn the parlors of heaven,  
 And the narrowest hinge in my hand puts to scorn all machinery,  
 And the cow crunching with depress'd head surpasses any statue,  
 And a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels,  
 And I could come every afternoon of my life to look at the farmer's girl boiling her iron tea-kettle and baking short-cake.

- Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892)

### The September Meeting

"One Day At Teton March" - a 48 minute color film.

This beautiful film is based on the book by Sally Carighar. It portrays wild-life in a swamp setting. A typical day's activities are caught by camera and narrator. Beaver, otters, ospreys, and trumpeter swans are some of the many animals seen.

We're off and running again. Many good programs and field trips have been set up for the entire year and for the first time they have been scheduled in calendar fashion. Our local branch of National Audubon now numbers about 150! Enjoy the monthly programs while learning more about nature. Refreshments will be served.

### 1976 - 1977 Calendar:

#### PROGRAMS:

- Oct. 26 Paul Weigman: "Natural Areas of Pennsylvania"
- Nov 30 Betty Kampschroer: "Pennsylvania's Comprehensive Water Quality Management Plan"
- Dec 19 Christmas Bird Count (Sunday)
- Jan 25 John Eveland: "Pennsylvania's Elk Herd"
- Feb 22 Annual Dinner. "A Thoreau Sampler"
- Mar 29 Richard Madson: "The Garrison Diversion Project"
- Apr 26 Hawk Mountain film: "Birds of Prey of Northeastern North America"
- May 31 "America's National Wonderlands: The National Park System"

#### FIELD TRIPS:

- Oct 18 Nature walk, Fort Roberdeau area
- Nov 6/7 Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Kempton, Pa.
- Feb 27 Winter birding, Canoe Creek State Park
- Mar 27 Regional waterfowl census
- Apr 16 Visit to Bear Run Nature Reserve, Mill Run, Pa.
- May 8 Spring bird count
- May 15 Bluebird trail visit
- Jun 12 Alan Seeger State Forest Natural Area

#### BOARD MEETINGS:

- |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Sep 10 | Jan 14 |        |
| Oct 15 | Feb 11 | May 20 |
| Nov 19 | Mar 18 |        |
| Dec 17 | Apr 15 |        |

Board meeting times and places will be announced at meetings. Anyone may attend and all are urged to get involved in these down to earth working sessions. Contact Don Wharton for more details.

Elections in January

We will elect a treasurer and a president-elect in January of 1977. The executive committee (board) is asking for nominations from the membership. The nominations will be announced in November in the Gnatcatcher and at the meeting. Please give this some thought and if you have people in mind pass their names along to Don Wharton or John Orr.

Williamsburg Fire Tower Migration Watch

September 18th saw Al Burd, John Orr, Don Wharton and his son Donald gathered at a pancake house in Pleasant Valley early and out for a trip to the so-called Tussey Mt. fire tower near Stone Valley (on the other side of the mountain from Pine Grove Mills. A dark day with rain was not at all encouraging. Southernly hawk migrations usually stop during bad weather. One could give it a try just for finding out what does move in such weather but the group decided to scout out another fire tower just past the town of Williamsburg, lying south on the same mountain called Tussey.

Upon entering Williamsburg you keep straight on through and then head gradually up a rather high mountain. At the top is a state sign marking the entrance to the fire tower and a small parking area. Leaving the cars, it's a pleasant mile walk to a well kept state facility at the top of the ridge. The field trip that day turned up nothing for the rain and heavy clouds were quite bad. The road up has a lot of nice wildflowers and some interesting trees. White birches grow there as do scrub oak, chestnut oak and American chestnut. The trip showed that it doesn't matter what kind of a day it is - there is plenty one can see and do anytime, anywhere out of doors.

The following day Don Wharton returned to climb the same road to the tower and a breezy, sunny day gave him 24 broad-wings! He saw kettles of hawks soaring on the thermals and thus brings to us a good place for watching. It's easy to get to. If anyone takes a trip there they should keep a careful record of birds seen and then pass it in to Don for our regional bird records. Contact Al, John or Don for further information on this new birding sight.

Miscellaneous Notes:

Needed: New Program Committee Chairman  
New Conservation Committee Chairman

Also: An "Alaska Issues Chairperson" is needed to serve as a contact with National on the Alaska park and refuge proposals. In a follow-up to the excellent slide presentation on the 80 million acre proposal, our group is being asked to keep the issues in hand for such an important matter. Congress has until December, 1978 to decide the fate of these amazing wild areas. The issues are complex and they feel a need for a "contact" who would gain an understanding of the whole thing. Information packets will be sent out this fall to the Alaska chairpersons. National sees our efforts here in part as an educational effort. The beautiful slide series with a great taped narration is available from our regional rep for our use. Contact Don Wharton (695-6959) if interested in filling this spot.

Coming later: a bluebird trail report. The Blair County Ecology Council will meet Oct. 7th with Mr. Bowerman to learn more about the state's Comprehensive Water Quality Management Plan (COWAMP). This meeting will be at 8:00 in the clubhouse of the Altoona Women's Club at Allegheny Furnace. All are welcome.

The Gnatcatcher  
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