

The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

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JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



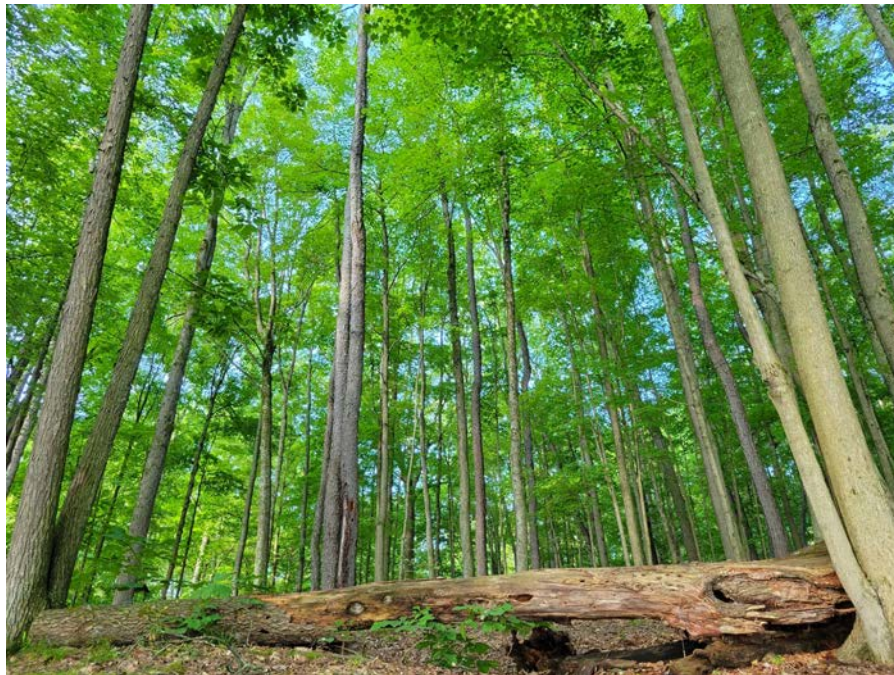
www.JVAS.org

President's Message by John Carter

Dear JVAS Community,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the splendors of the seasonal transformation from summer to fall.

Henry David Thoreau once said, *"I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees."* I took this quote to mean when we walk into nature, we come out strengthened and confident in ourselves. A walk into nature helps clear our minds, builds a positive relationship with the natural world, and creates a sense of peace.



Over the past month JVAS hosted several field trips in which many people attended exploring and learning about the great outdoors. We look forward to upcoming field trips, including the 53rd Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in the Culp circle. Please consider volunteering to help with part of the circle count on Saturday, December 18th. See more details about the CBC in this issue of The Gnatcatcher.

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Juniata Valley Audubon Society (JVAS) is a chapter of the National Audubon Society and is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity.

Juniata Valley Audubon accomplishes its mission through advocacy, science, land stewardship, and education – working directly with Audubon Mid-Atlantic, the district office of the National Audubon Society.

The JVAS is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit, educational organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Gifts are deductible for income tax purposes (Tax ID # 25-1533496).

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Juniata Valley Audubon Society Evening Program

Our evening programs are designed for a general audience; all programs are free and open to the public. Hot, shade-grown coffee direct from Lenca Coffee Roasters in Honduras will be available to drink at no charge. Decaf from Columbia is also available.

**Roasted Lenca Coffee will also be for sale: Ground or whole bean
12 oz. bag is \$12 2 lb. bag is \$24.**

This really smooth, low-acid coffee is great for Christmas gifts!

We'll meet at the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA

Directions: Take Interstate I-99 to the Bellwood/Route 865 Exit (Exit 41). Follow Rt. 865 through the Sheetz/Martin's intersection. Proceed about 4 blocks and turn right at the "Business District" sign, just before the railroad overpass. Turn left at the "T" and travel to the stop sign. Continue straight a short distance; the library is on your right.

NOVEMBER PROGRAM: Tuesday, Nov. 16 @ 7 pm

"Unexpected Movements: Backyard Birds Traveling More Than We Thought"

Presented by Joe Gyekis

Some birds commonly classified as non-migratory actually engage in migratory behavior in some instances. This talk will mostly focus on White-breasted Nuthatches, but will also discuss Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Northern Cardinals, and a few other honorable mentions.

Joe Gyekis is a health science teacher at Penn State and an avid birder. He's a member of the Penn State Avian Education Committee and the State College Bird Club. He is especially interested in local patch birding, bird window collisions, nocturnal flight calls, and migration of small land birds.

CHAPTER MEMBERS:

**It's time to renew your JVAS membership.
Complete the enclosed membership form and
mail with payment before January 2022.**



CALLING ALL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTERS!

Saturday, December 18, 2021, is the JVAS CBC!!

We need volunteers to scan the fields, skies, backyards, ponds, lakes – anywhere birds might be found.

If you live in the circle, you can be a **feeder watcher** and count your backyard birds, or you can be a **field observer** and cover a certain section of the count circle, which is centered at Culp in Sinking Valley. We encourage counters to work in teams – the more eyes the better!

Sign up soon to be a counter!

Call or email **Laura Jackson** or **John Carter**, Count Coordinators.

Laura: Phone: 814-652-9268 Email: jacksonlaura73@gmail.com

John: Phone: 814-933-7426 Email: carter0206@aol.com



The **Tally Rally** will be held at the **U.S. Union Hotel Tavern**, 401 S. Juniata St., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. Each person pays their way.

We'll meet at **5 pm in the Gold Room**, order from the menu, and after we eat, we will do the bird species tally. Menu: www.menupix.com/menudirectory/menu.php?id=3825111

You don't have to be a counter to join us, but let **Laura know by December 13** if you plan to attend – seating is limited.

Counters will be assigned a section of the circle, so counts don't overlap.

Sections:

Northern Altoona

Bellwood

Tyrone-Tipton

Park Forest/Watts Road

Brush Mountain (NE end)

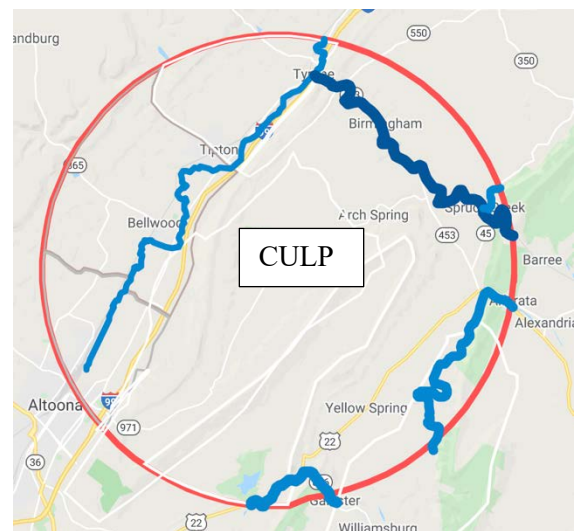
Sinking Valley

Canoe Creek State Park

Canoe Valley

Tyrone Treatment Plan

Juniata River Corridor



The Bedford Co. CBC is centered at Manns Choice, Pa. and will be held on Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022. Contact compilers

Mike & Laura Jackson: 814-652-9268 or jacksonlaura73@gmail.com if you are willing to help.

President's Message, continued from page 1:

Here are some scenic locations to consider visiting in the local outdoors:

The Albemarle Nature Trail: (2858 Back Vail Rd, Tyrone, PA 16686) follows a 1-mile loop through a deciduous forest, open meadow, and wetlands formed by a beaver dam. The area serves as home to a variety of animal species and native birds such as wild turkey, great blue heron, owls, red-tailed hawk, and songbirds. The Albemarle Nature Trail provides habitats for many plant species.

Bells Gap Trail: (163 Igou Road, Tyrone, PA 16686) has outstanding views of eastern ridges, the Tuckahoe Valley and Bellwood Reservoir. It's a Rail Trail that is an easy out and back stroll 2 miles (one-way). The trail consists of fresh crushed limestone surface and is home for many bird species. Along with the rich railroad history, the trail includes several covered benches on which to rest and enjoy the scenery.

Coyler Lake Trail: (Lingle Rd, Centre Hall, PA 16828) The Lake Loop is 2.7 miles that features a beautiful 77-acre lake and is good for all skill levels, owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and managed by the Fish and Boat Commission for public fishing and boating. The trail is primarily used for hiking, walking, nature trips, and bird watching.

Lake Perez—Lake Trail: (325 Charter Oak Rd, Petersburg, PA 16669) This 3-mile lake loop is in Stone Valley Recreation Area near Shaver's Creek Environmental Center. It's a wonderful opportunity to see wildlife and numerous woodland bird species. There are also several surrounding trails of various lengths that you can explore.

I will conclude this message with a quote from Albert Einstein, "*Look deep into nature and you will understand everything better.*"

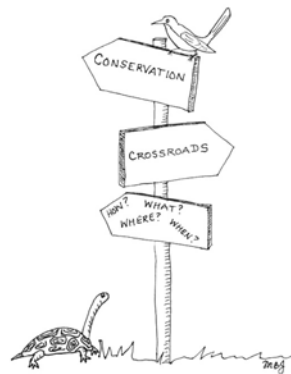


**Please send your email so we can keep you updated on field trips
and important conservation issues!**

Email: jvas771@gmail.com

We will not share your email with anyone!!

CONSERVATION CROSSROADS is a section of *The Gnatcatcher* that features environmental issues across a spectrum of local, national, and global concerns. Contact JVAS Vice-President Laura Jackson, if you know of an issue that deserves our attention and subsequent action. More information on conservation concerns is found at www.JVAS.org Click on the Conservation tab.



1. Proposed Rutter’s Gas/Convenience Store upslope from Old Crow Wetlands near Huntingdon, Pa.

JVAS members have expressed their concerns and opposition at Smithfield Township meetings. We encourage you to attend the monthly township meetings and express your concerns. Township meetings are the first Tuesday of each month, at 6:00 pm. The location is the township building in Smithfield, on the corner of 13th Street and Mt. Vernon Avenue, or 2 blocks south of Rt 26 (Pennsylvania Ave.).

2. Proposed Rutter’s Gas/Convenience Store upslope of Sandy Run Exceptional Value Wetlands along Sabbath Rest Road, beside the Days Inn & Suites by Wyndham in Pincroft, Pa.

The concerns for this Rutter’s Store (with parking for 53 trucks) are similar to those in Huntingdon. Stormwater and any hydrocarbon pollution will flow into the wetlands along Sandy Run, classified as a High-Quality Coldwater Fishery. The Pa. Fish & Boat Commission classifies Sandy Run as a Class A Wild Trout stream with naturally reproducing wild trout, thus making it an Exceptional Value wetland. JVAS and other groups asked DEP for a public hearing to address environmental concerns.

3. The Lost Bird Project

<https://www.shaverscreek.org/public-programs-and-events/the-lost-bird-project/>

As the presenting sponsor, Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center has brought the Lost Bird Project to central Pennsylvania. On August 24, 2021, the five sculptures arrived at Shaver’s Creek and four partner sites — The Arboretum at Penn State, the Hintz Family Alumni Center, the Penn State Altoona Reflecting Pond, and Millbrook Marsh Nature Center — where they will remain for one year.

We invite you to reflect on the fates of these extinct species by visiting each statue and participating in public programming. The Lost Bird Project is an ode to vanished species, vanished times, and trailblazing conservationists who fought against species extinction under urgent circumstances. As Rosalie Edge instructed, “The time to protect a species is while it’s still common.”

Plans are in the works to show **The Lost Bird Project** documentary film in the Altoona Area. We will let you know when we have more details.

We’d like to thank **Reliance Bank**, our corporate sponsor for this newsletter, for donating funds to help cover the cost of printing this issue of *The Gnatcatcher*.



www.reliancebank.bank

1-800-570-0876

The JVAS family mourns the loss of two members. Both were visionaries and leaders who made the world a better place. We will miss you!

Noted peace scholar Bruce Bonta passed away on Sept. 27, 2021. He was 80 years old.

Excerpts from Bruce's Memorial:

Bruce's lifelong focus on travel and learning from other cultures began early. He started reading the Christian Science Monitor in 1950 at the age of ten, as part of an otherwise normal childhood in New Jersey. After graduating from Pennington High School in 1959, he attended Bucknell University, and met his future wife, Marcia Myers, when both volunteered to help with Burma-Bucknell Weekend. History majors who shared an interest in the outdoors, their courtship consisted of exploring the back roads of central Pennsylvania on a motor scooter, cementing their love not only for each other but also for the natural beauty of the commonwealth, where both of their families had deep roots.



Marcia and Bruce in 2014

Bruce and Marcia married in 1962. After Bruce's graduation in 1963, they headed to Washington, DC, to enroll in the just-formed Peace Corps, but had to drop out when Marcia became pregnant with their first child. Bruce got a job at the Library of Congress, launching him on his career as an academic reference librarian. He pursued his Master of Library Science at the University of Maine while working at the Colby College Library in Waterville and adapting to country living with his growing family—early participants in the back-to-the-land movement.

In 1971, Bruce accepted a position as reference librarian at Penn State's Pattee Library, and he and Marcia moved back to central Pennsylvania, this time with three boys and a strong desire to find a place in the woods. They succeeded beyond their wildest dreams, finding an old mountaintop farm in Plummer's Hollow, on Brush Mountain near Tyrone. Their early years in the hollow were chronicled in Marcia's first book, *Escape to the Mountain*. As Marcia's writing career took off, Bruce became her first and best reader. Starting in the 80s, they relived their courtship on a grander scale, driving all over the state so Marcia could gather material for her "Outbound Journeys" column in Pennsylvania Wildlife, to which Bruce contributed photographs and detailed driving directions essential in the pre-GPS era.

From 1979 to 1991, Bruce gave himself a crash course in environmental law as he and Marcia fought to prevent Plummer's Hollow from being clear-cut by absentee owners, battling each to a stand-still until the owners agreed to sell. Bruce's tenacity enabled him to expand the family's property acreage from 140 to 648. Bruce and Marcia then became active in the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, where they found many other private landowners receptive to their message of encouraging better deer hunting and trying to learn what the forest itself wants.

During the same period, alarmed by the accelerating extinction crisis and signs of climate change, Bruce and Marcia headed an International Issues Committee for the Juniata Valley Audubon Society, where they built direct linkages with other grassroots nature clubs in countries like the Philippines, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Peru—a legacy that continues to this day.

Bruce is survived by his wife Marcia, their sons Steven, David, and Mark, granddaughters Eva and Elanor, and great-granddog Obie. A private memorial service is planned for late November. Donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to the Tyrone Public Library or Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

JVAS members are encouraged to attend Bruce's memorial service in Plummer's Hollow at 2 pm on Sunday, Nov. 21. Please let Mark know if you plan to attend and how many will be with you.

Email Mark to confirm at markabonta@yahoo.com.

Noted professor and forest advocate Dr. Jim Finley passed away on Oct. 2, 2021.

He was 72 years old.

Excerpts from Jim's Memorial:



Jim graduated from Munhall High School in 1965. In 1970, he completed his bachelor's degree in Forest Science at The Pennsylvania State University (PSU) and began a career at the USDA Forest Service Northern Area Research Station in Broomall, PA. In 1975, he completed a master's degree in Forest Resources at PSU and was employed as an area extension educator in Dushore, PA. In 1981, he joined the School of Forest Resources faculty at University Park and advanced research and extension education programs on sustainable forest resource management focusing on private forestland. In 1991, he completed his doctoral degree in Extension Education at PSU.

Through his efforts, Jim reached hundreds of thousands with a message of caring for the woods in the state, region, and nation and his research became foundational for many seeking to work in the space of people and forest.

Jim dedicated his life to promoting the protection, health, and vitality of forests. To this end, in 1991, he founded the PA Forest Stewardship education and outreach program in partnership with the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry and coordinated the now over 750 PA Forest Stewards volunteer program.

Jim co-created and chaired PSU's Human Dimensions of Natural Resources and the Environment inter-college degree program and was a Pinchot Institute for Conservation Senior Research Fellow. He also served, most recently, on the boards of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Foundation for Sustainable Forestry, Policy Council for WeConservePA, and many others. Jim was a Society of American Foresters Fellow, PSU School of Forest Resources Outstanding Alumni, and, among his many service awards, was recently recognized by Forests for the Bay as a Chesapeake Forest Champion.

During his tenure at PSU, he mentored hundreds of graduate students, undergraduates, and natural resources professionals, and served on numerous committees for the Bureau of Forestry, other state and federal agencies, and organizations focused on forests and people around the world.

Later in his career he established the Center for Private Forests at Penn State and, despite retiring in 2017, worked tirelessly to foster the Center's development and growth. Jim spent his free hours working in his woodshop, volunteering at the faith-based Krislund Camp in Madisonburg, PA, and enjoying the woods, family, and friends.

Jim is survived by his wife, Linda Jones Finley of Port Matilda, PA, one son, Andrew O. Finley (Sarah R. Laubscher) of Okemos, Michigan, three grandchildren, Ava G., Oliver J., and Callum A., a brother, David A. Finley (Anna Marie Balint) of Coatesville, PA, and a nephew, Nathan Finley also of Coatesville, PA.

YOU'LL LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TWO MEN AND HOW THEY IMPACTED SO MANY PEOPLE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE GNATCATCHER.

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON

PO BOX 1013
ALTOONA, PA 16603

Address Service Requested



Honduran Coffee for sale on-line

Emilio Garcia, our partner who produces shade-grown coffee in Honduras, has expanded his coffee sales to include sustainably harvested, shade-grown coffee from other countries. You can order freshly roasted coffee (ground or whole bean) from **Lenca Coffee Roasters: <https://lencacoffeeroasters.com>**

Fair Trade shade-grown **decaf coffee** from Colombia is also available.

Emilio sells his green coffee beans through <https://lencafarms.com>

Remember, shade-grown coffee is good for you and good for our birds!

