

# The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

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Published bimonthly (except for July and August)

as a benefit for members of the

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



[www.JVAS.org](http://www.JVAS.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by John Carter

Dear JVAS Community,

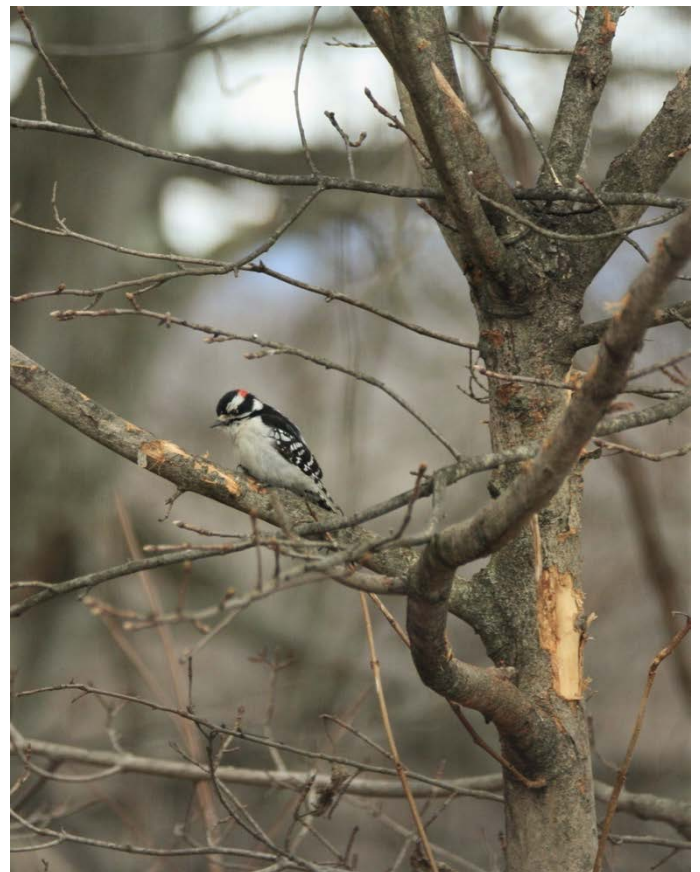
As we make our push through the winter season, we will begin to see more and more new visitors at our backyard feeders and local birding hotspots. This is a feeling that invigorates us to appreciate and admire the birding world. A sighting that I was completely blown away by this winter, was having 4 Eastern Towhees visit my feeders at once. The Towhee is a species that usually heads south during our colder months, so paying attention to the changing patterns of birds is important.

I would like to ask our birding community this question, *“When you watch birds in your backyard or in the field, how closely do you pay attention to the behaviors of the birds?”*

Watching bird behaviors and their interactions develops a deeper appreciation of what birds encompass. Although, if a Snowy Owl popped up in an adjacent field next to my home, I would probably be on cloud nine and in awe of its beauty.

A bird behavior that I enjoy is how birds rub their beaks on nearby tree limbs and branches. Typically, this is something birds do after feeding on messy foods such as suet, fruits, or insects. Other research shows that birds will wipe their bill to help shape or sharpen them. In the photos shared, are a female Northern Cardinal and Downy Woodpecker visiting familiar trees in my backyard to display the bill rubbing behavior. More information about this type of bird behavior can be found in this Audubon article: <https://www.audubon.org/news/heres-why-birds-rub-their-beaks-stuff>.

*Continued on page 2.*



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, continued from page 1

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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- ◆ Susan Braun
- ◆ Sharon Clewell
- ◆ Michael Kensinger
- ◆ Paola Jaramillo Calderon



Bird behaviors are incredible and instinctive in their natural habitats. This February marks the month for the 25<sup>th</sup> Great Backyard Bird Count, which embraces the opportunity to soak in the bounty of birds in the location you are documenting and observing birds for 4 consecutive days. What I would encourage you to do whenever you are out bird watching, is take time to watch how the birds interact with each other. Is there anything unusual that is occurring, for example, a bird seems to be frozen on a tree limb because a raptor is nearby and wants to remain inconspicuous? Are there times during the day you are seeing specific bird species or is there anything unusual about the activity? Birds teach us so much about our surroundings and environment. This is why we are involved with the Audubon Society and dedicated to how we can help protect and preserve our precious feathered friends.

I am inspired with our birding community and the support you provide to help protect our birds. We need to continue to take time to observe and appreciate each bird we see and hear.



←————→ **ATTENTION ALL NATIONAL MEMBERS!!**



Due to an increase in postage and newsletter printing costs, we plan to send paper newsletters to just JVAS CHAPTER MEMBERS who request them. See Membership form on page 4 or at [www.JVAS.org](http://www.JVAS.org)

**All other members will receive a digital copy of the newsletter – if we have your email.**



**Please send your name and email address to:**  
**[JVAS771@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JVAS771@GMAIL.COM).** We will not share it with anyone.

**JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY EVENING PROGRAMS**  
**will be HYBRID: in person and by Zoom**

**Note: Follow these instructions for the March and April Meetings, if joining by Zoom**  
**Try to log in about 5 – 10 minutes before 7 pm.**

- To join by computer, use this link:  
**<https://psu.zoom.us/j/97418229426> Passcode: 123456**
- To join from the Zoom app on a smartphone: enter this meeting ID:  
**974 1822 9426 Passcode: 123456**
- To join by phone, call this number: +1 301 715 8592 (US Toll)  
Enter the meeting ID followed by the pound sign.  
**974 1822 9426**

**The In-person meeting will be at the Bellwood-Antis Library**

**MARCH PROGRAM: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 @ 7 pm via ZOOM and In Person**  
**at the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA.**

**"The Moshannon Creek Watershed, Its Current State and Potential" by Eric Skrivseth**

The Juniata Valley Audubon Society recently added several zip codes to its coverage area. The watershed for Moshannon Creek flows through several of those zip codes. Moshannon Creek is a major tributary of the West Branch of the Susquehanna. It forms in the area where Blair, Cambria, Clearfield, and Centre Counties converge. The stream flows generally northeastward and serves as the border between Clearfield and Centre Counties over most of its length. It joins the West Branch a few miles upstream of Karthaus, PA.

Moshannon Creek's 274-square-mile natural watershed is about equally divided between healthy streams, many with trout, and streams that are impaired, mostly from the legacy impacts of coal and clay mining. The Moshannon Creek Watershed Association (MCWA) formed in July of 2019 with a mission of protecting and improving the Moshannon Creek watershed. In 2020 and 2021, MCWA, with a lot of partners, did an extensive survey of the watershed and produced the Coldwater Conservation Plan for the Moshannon Creek Watershed in Central Pennsylvania. This report is found at [www.moshannoncreek.org/reports/](http://www.moshannoncreek.org/reports/).

The Coldwater Conservation Plan discusses the watershed in detail and includes a discussion of a sequence of restoration steps, which if completed in order, will add miles of healthy streams to the main stem of Moshannon Creek. This program will discuss the watershed and that restoration plan. We will include a discussion of the headwaters area where steps to safeguard good quality habitat are our primary focus. As part of examining the headwaters area, MCWA has asked JVAS to help us determine whether the headwaters area contains bird species dependent on clean water, such as Louisiana Waterthrush.

Please read Eric's biography at JVAS Program's website: <https://www.jvas.org/events/categories/programs/>

**APRIL PROGRAM: Tuesday, APRIL 26, 2022 @ 7 pm via ZOOM and In Person at the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA.**

**Note: We are meeting a week later than usual – this is the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in April**

- To join by computer, use this link:

**<https://psu.zoom.us/j/97418229426> Passcode: 123456**

- To join from the Zoom app on a smartphone: enter this meeting ID:

**974 1822 9426 Passcode: 123456**

### **JVAS Members' Night and Wrap-up of the Earth Week Birding Classic**

It's been too long since we've gotten together to celebrate our members' hobbies and experiences. It's sure to be a good time, with lots of socializing and an impressive assortment of slideshows, videos, wildlife art, nature poetry, nature crafts, and other by-products of our ongoing fascination with the natural world.

Contact Program Chair Laura Jackson ([jacksonlaura73@gmail.com](mailto:jacksonlaura73@gmail.com)) by Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> if you'd like to give a slideshow or video presentation, which should be no longer than **10 minutes**. We'll cap the evening with a wrap-up of the Earth Week Birding Results.

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

**Email: [jvas771@gmail.com](mailto:jvas771@gmail.com)**

**We will not share your email with anyone!!**

**Become a JVAS Chapter-only member at one of the annual membership categories:**

**Check the appropriate box:**

Individual Membership, \$15

Family Membership, \$20

Supporting Membership, \$35

Friend of the JVAS, \$50

Corporate Membership, \$100

Life Membership, \$500

**Membership Year runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>**

Make your check payable to **JVAS**

Mail to: Juniata Valley Audubon Society

P. O. Box 1013

Altoona, PA 16603

Or join online at  
**[www.jvas.org/join-juniata-valley-audubon/](http://www.jvas.org/join-juniata-valley-audubon/)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, I will accept the digital copy of *The Gnatcatcher*.**

**No, I prefer to receive a paper copy.**



## SPRING FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS 2022



### **Birding the Bells Gap Rail Trail the first Tues. of each month: 10-noon Dates: 3/1, 4/5, 5/3, 6/2, 7/5, 8/2, 9/6, 10/4, 11/1, 12/6/2022**

Join John Carter on the Bells Gap Trail every first **Tuesday of the Month** from 10 am-12 noon while enjoying outstanding views of eastern ridges, the Tuckahoe Valley, and the Bellwood Reservoir. We will stroll 2 miles of the trail that consist of fresh crushed limestone surface. Let's track different bird species we see and have an enjoyable walk.

What to bring: binoculars, comfortable walking shoes, drink and snack as desired.

Directions to Bells Gap Trailhead: GPS coordinates 40.613171, -78.362070.

Parking and Trail Access to Bellwood trailhead: 163 Igou Road, Tyrone, PA 16686. Let's meet at the pavilion in the parking lot.

Contact trip leader, John Carter at 814-933-7426 or email [carter0206@aol.com](mailto:carter0206@aol.com), if you have questions.

### **Shaver's Creek: The Lost Bird Project Walks and Talks start March 5, 2022**

Shaver's Creek has posted 22 events (nature walks, talks, and film screening) at:

[www.shaverscreek.org/public-programs-and-events/the-lost-bird-project/](http://www.shaverscreek.org/public-programs-and-events/the-lost-bird-project/)

The arrival of the Lost Bird sculptures marked the beginning of a region-wide effort to encourage the practice of conservation. Attend special programs and visit artistic and educational installations that showcase the value of birds and their power to connect people to the natural world.

### **Saturday, March 19: Bedford Co. Whitetail Wetlands Birding 8:30am – 12 noon**

This will be a joint field trip with Bedford Co. Bird and Nature Club.

Meet at the Live Well Chiropractic at 1634 Quaker Valley Rd, New Paris, PA 15554 at 8:30 am. We will carpool a short distance to the wetlands. The hike will last about 3 hours. Wear waterproof boots, bring binoculars, listen to the forecast, and dress accordingly.

Trip Leaders: Mike and Laura Jackson 814-652-9268. Optional Lunch at Hoss's Steak and Seafood at 12 noon. Call Mike and Laura to confirm this trip, as we often have to cancel due to icy conditions.

### **Friday noon April 15 – Sunday noon April 24: Earth Week Birding Classic Registration Deadline is Monday, April 11**

The goal is for teams in seven different categories to count as many species of birds as possible over a 24-hour period any time during the week beginning on Apr 15 at noon and ending at noon on April 24. This non-profit event is co-sponsored by the Environmental Studies program at Penn State Altoona and JVAS. Pledges that team members garner will support bird conservation and education in central Pennsylvania. Teams of 3 or more (2 or more for Senior citizens) will count birds in Blair and surrounding counties, and prizes will be awarded during the closing ceremony on **Zoom** immediately following the event.

First decide on your Team Category: Coot: ages 65+ only Osprey: Penn State Students only  
Towhee: birding in one county Mallard: Penn State Altoona grounds only  
Pipit: birding only on foot Phoebe: Family team

**To register and for more information, please contact Catherine Farr at [catiegk5059@gmail.com](mailto:catiegk5059@gmail.com).**

*SPRING FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS 2022 continued on page 8*

## OLD CROW ACTION ALERT We need your help!!

Please write to agencies and newspapers about Rutter's plan to build a large gas station (Rutter's Store #93) next to Old Crow Wetland near Huntingdon, Pa.

Below are talking points, but don't use these exact words. Agencies that receive form letters that are all the same will consider those letters to be just one.

**Agency Contact information on page 7.**



**If a 24-hour Rutter's gas station and convenience store catering to large trucks were built on the property next to and uphill from Old Crow Wetland:**

1. There is great potential for pollution from fuel spills and non-point run-off from the parking area. The application lists "Adjacent wetlands" as receiving stormwater flow.
2. Wetlands have been reduced by 50% in the U.S. since pre-European settlement. Old Crow is a mitigated wetland built and owned by PennDOT to make up for other wetlands lost to development. The area was originally a wetland, then drained for farming, when PennDOT bought the land and restored it back to its original wetland habitat.
3. A busy 24-hour Rutter's will bring increased light (detrimental to nocturnal insects and migrating birds), noise pollution, litter, and traffic adjacent to Old Crow Wetland.
4. Rutter's has a history of negligence in their stores in Pennsylvania. Five violations at Rutter's stores are recorded in the Pennsylvania Bulletin in 2021 for contamination of soil and water. Listed here: [www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Home/Pabull](http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Home/Pabull)
5. We believe that Old Crow Wetland qualifies as a wetland of "Exceptional Value" because it's adjacent to a drinking water source. Exceptional Value wetlands are "located along an existing public or private drinking water supply, including both surface water and groundwater sources, that maintain the quality or quantity of the drinking water supply." 25 Pa. Code § 105.17
6. Old Crow is a bank wetland that has been used by several PennDot projects (mainly highway) in the region as offset wetland loss due to construction. Any degradation or destruction would make those projects that used the bank not compliant with their plans that were approved at the time of the project.
7. A huge area of the Rutter's development will be impervious (4.78 acres). Runoff from pavement and buildings could result in thermal, particulate, and chemical pollution of the Old Crow Wetland. The application lists "Adjacent wetlands" as receiving stormwater flow. A fuel leak from underground tanks would be disastrous.
8. Old Crow is a birding hotspot on the Susquehanna Birding Trail - visited by bird clubs, groups from Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, local high school and college classes, and others.

Visitors from across Pennsylvania and beyond value the diverse wildlife of Old Crow, and their visits contribute to our local economy.

Write to the editor of The Daily News (or other local newspapers, Altoona, etc.)

[https://www.huntingdondailynews.com/site/forms/online\\_services/letter\\_editor/](https://www.huntingdondailynews.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/)

Please write to these agencies:

**1. Huntingdon County Conservation District**

**(top priority for a letter)**

Celina Seftas, District Manager  
10605 Raystown Road, Suite A  
Huntingdon PA 16652

[manager@huntingdonconservation.org](mailto:manager@huntingdonconservation.org)

814-627-1626 ext 5

**2. PA Department of Environmental Protection**

**(top priority for a letter)**

Scott Williamson  
Regional Program Manager  
S. Central Regional Office  
909 Elmerton Ave.

Harrisburg, PA 17110

Phone: 717-705-4799

[scwilliams@pa.gov](mailto:scwilliams@pa.gov)

★  
Ask DEP to hold a public hearing to address water pollution concerns.

**3. Smithfield Township Zoning and Planning Office**

202 South 13th Street, Suite 3

Huntingdon, PA 16652

814-643-6702

[smithtwp@comcast.net](mailto:smithtwp@comcast.net)

**4. Huntingdon County Planning Commission**

Courthouse Annex 1

205 Penn Street, Suite 3

Huntingdon, PA 16652

Phone: 814-643-5091

Email: [planning@huntingdoncounty.net](mailto:planning@huntingdoncounty.net)

**5. Rutter's Gas Stations and Convenience Stores**

2295 Susquehanna Trail, Suite C

York, PA 17404

1-800-964-5735 or 717-848-9827

<https://www.rutters.com/contact-us-zoho-web-form/>

**6. PennDOT Engineering District 9**

Tom Yokum, District 9 Environmental Manager

1620 N. Juniata St.

Hollidaysburg, PA 16648 Phone: 814-696-7250



Note the state/federal agencies involved in this wetland project: US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish & Wildlife Service, PA Game Commission, PA DEP, Huntingdon Co. Conservation District, PennDOT



The Old Crow Wetland is an important stop-over site for birds that need to rest and refuel. State-endangered **American Bittern, Least Bittern, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Great Egret** and state-threatened **Northern Harrier** have been documented at Old Crow during migration. Habitat loss and water pollution are major threats.



## SPRING FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS 2022, continued

### **Sunday, April 24 Earth Fest at Millbrook Marsh 1 – 5 pm**

Join JVAS and other non-profits celebrating Earth Day at Millbrook Marsh, 548 Puddintown Road, State College. Spend the afternoon outdoors exploring displays from environmental organizations, participating in activities and games, visiting local vendors, and enjoying local entertainment. This event is great for all ages and fun for the whole family! Free, donations are appreciated.

### **Saturday, May 7 PA Central Pa Native Plant Festival 10 am – 3 pm**

Join JVAS at the Pennsylvania Native Plant Sale at Boal Mansion in Boalsburg to celebrate and purchase native plants. Educational programs will also be offered at 11 am and 1 pm. Food vendors, too!

### **Saturday, May 21 Woods Walk at Mike and Laura Jacksons' Property (Bedford Co.)**

Located at 8621 Black Valley Road, Everett, PA. Audubon's Scott Parkhill will co-lead the walk to focus on birds and healthy forests. Mark your calendar – more details in the next newsletter.

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### **CULP 2021 Christmas Bird Count Recap from Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021, by John Carter**

Famous NFL football coach Vince Lombardi once said, "Mental toughness is many things and rather difficult to explain. Its qualities are sacrifice and self-denial. Also, most importantly, it is combined with a perfectly disciplined will that refuses to give in. It's a state of mind – you could call it character in action."

The forecast for the day was mostly rain, which would normally mean this would be a tough bird outing, however when you start with a pair of uncommon Rusty Blackbirds and a singing Winter Wren at your first stop it sets the tone of a great start to the 53<sup>rd</sup> CULP Christmas Bird Count.

With steady rain for the first couple of hours of the morning, I decided to adjust my route to focus on the roadside birding and checking out wetlands within the Bellwood sector I was tasked with. With finds of Green-winged Teal, and American Black Duck, and a solid flock of 63 Wild Turkeys, this was an uplifting way to help contribute to the Culp CBC.

The rain soon let up and I was geared to hit my prime spots between the Bell Gap Rail Trail and the Northern Blair Rec Center Ray Amato Memorial Trail. The birds were ready to wake up from the drizzle and rejoice with their calls along the trails. A Hermit Thrush kicked through the leaf litter to hop on a branch to say hello, and soon after an inter-species flock, which included 3 Golden-crowned Kinglets, Tufted Titmouse, and a Brown Creeper were thrilled to bounce around in the sight of my binoculars. A Swamp Sparrow was very curious and would treat both my pup Dawson and me to a show in a brush pile along the trail.

It was a fun day to chat via the Group WhatsApp text messaging and hear about the amazing effort other participants were dedicating to the count. Dawson and I tallied 38 different bird species, 715 total birds with over 9 hours logged in. At the end of the day, it was a pleasure to share birding stories with other participants at the US Hotel Tavern, in Hollidaysburg for the tally count.



Front L – R: Margaret and Eric Skrivseth, Warren Baker, John Carter. Back: Michael Kensinger, Sam Dietze, George Mahon, Laura and Mike Jackson



**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](http://www.JVAS.org) Click on the Conservation tab.



**1. Proposed Rutter’s Gas/Convenience Store upslope from Old Crow Wetlands near Huntingdon, Pa.** Rutters has submitted their application to the Huntingdon Co. Conservation District.

JVAS members have repeatedly 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.).



Join the Coalition to Save Old Crow Wetland FB page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/27111265092285>

Write letters!!  
 See pages 6 and 7 for talking points and contact information.

Yard signs were distributed and placed in strategic areas to show our concerns.

**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.**

DEP and Rutter’s are corresponding regarding a technical deficiency letter that DEP sent to Rutter’s. In December, President Bill Anderson of The Little Juniata River Association sent comments to DEP regarding concerns over erosion and sedimentation controls, and stormwater controls, as well as repeating a request for a public hearing.

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. Anthracite Ridge Wind Project (proposed) impacting four mountain tops in Schuylkill Co.**

The Hegins Township Zoning Board denied the application on Jan. 11, 2022, but the developer has appealed to the County Court of Common Pleas where the judge will decide the appeal. There is a major standoff between the developer and the Fort Indiantown Gap, which maintains that wind turbines will reduce needed air space and put pilots at risk. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not issued an opinion yet, and can’t prohibit the project, but the developer will have problems getting insurance and investments if the project is ruled as a hazard to aircraft.

## February Reflections by Michael Kensinger

Altoona, Pa – A Carolina wren and a hermit thrush make the most of a changing habitat, as vultures soar in the sky...

When it comes to the change of seasons, I refuse to put any real stock into the man-created calendar we all use daily. I mean, sure, we must follow a calendar for our professional responsibilities, but marking a particular day when winter turns to spring, seems senseless. For the naturalist who doesn't just look, but notices things, spring starts sometime in February. After all, the turkey vultures return to the Pennsylvania landscape long before the first daffodils are ever in bloom. To some, the first signs of spring may be the lush bursts of skunk cabbage protruding out of a snow-covered forest floor. For another person, the first "peep" out of a spring peeper is the signal. For all intents and purposes, spring begins in February for those who seek it out.

Embarking on a February hike this past Valentine's Day, I found myself enamored by four turkey vultures soaring in the sky above the ridge I was on. The popular idea that robins are the harbinger of spring is erroneous in my opinion; for spring comes wheeling in on the wings of turkey vultures if you lift your eyes to the sky. After all, the robin, while it's one of my favorite common yard birds, is a year-round resident in Pennsylvania, thriving on the winter fruits of sumac, holly, wild grape, and crab apples.

In the drab February landscape, I enjoy following the tracks of wildlife in the snow. The stories to be told are many, be it a trail of paw prints that leads you to a freshly renovated fox den or an area where a whitetail buck bedded down and shed his antlers at winter's end. Whatever they may be, the tales of the winter woods are fleeting by mid-February, as occasionally warm and sunny days begin to melt the snow.

A few miles into my jaunt, I came across a thicket of privet. I frowned when I saw it. Privet is an invasive species from Asia or Europe that spreads without relent. Birds eat the sugary high-carb berries and carry the seeds away in their bellies, before excreting them in a casing of white fertilizer in a new location. Regrettably, we now know that this popular ornamental hedge offers no lipids or real nutritional benefits to the birds. In short, the birds are attracted to the berries in the way many are attracted to candy. As I stared at the towering shrub, I thought about when a good time might be to cut the shrub down. Inside the tangles of privet, I saw two small birds – each subtly plumed in tans and browns, but distinctly different in shape. I approached gently when the tiny tuft of joy emitted a resonating "chicory, chicory, chicory, chick!" I knew immediately it was a Carolina Wren.



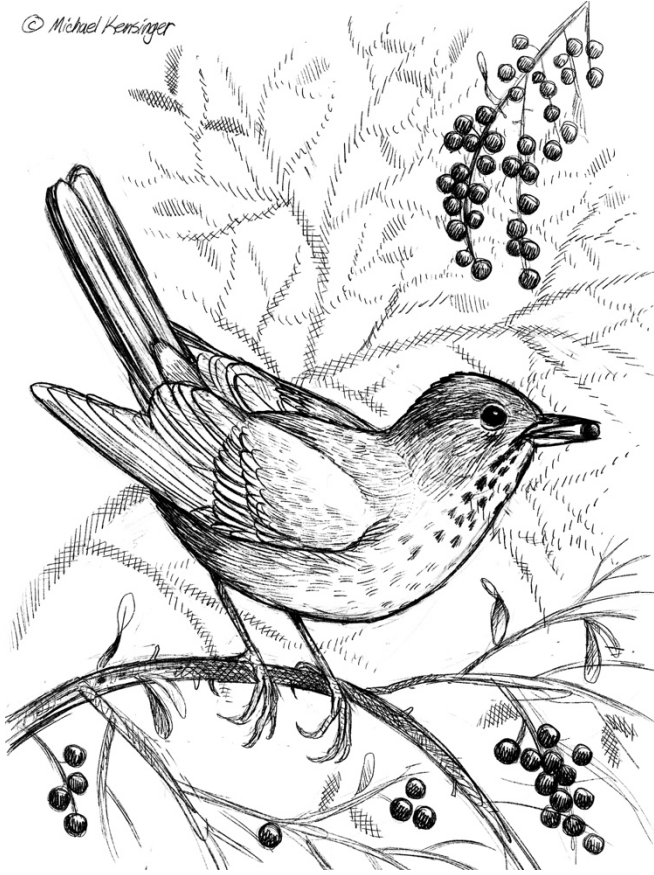
Carolina Wren by Michael Kensinger

*Continued on page 11*

## February Reflections, continued

The wren was working over a fallen log amidst the branches of privet, picking at the moss that magically remains green through winter. With the big-mouthed beauty, a second bird was scouring the tangled privet branches for berries. I lifted my binoculars and saw that it was a Hermit Thrush, one of my favorites of all songbirds.

© Michael Kensinger



Hermit Thrush by Michael Kensinger

Although humbly plumed with his tannish-brown body and rusty tail, the hermit thrush has the most beautiful voice of all North American songbirds. In my opinion, only its close relative, the wood thrush, can compete for that title. To put it into words, as I did with the Carolina wren, would be impossible. There are no letters in the alphabet that would replicate how the haunting flute-like notes cut through the forest. Nor would it show how the metallic twinkling sounds vibrate, seeming like sparkles to the ear. That said, this hermit thrush was completely silent. The wren did enough talking for the both, as they darted around in the brush together.

It might be a stretch, but one might even say they seemed to enjoy one another's company on that drab February afternoon. May these two little birds be a reminder to all, that friends can be very different from one another, and remain friends through the toughest of times.

Our sincere appreciation for donations sent in honor of  
John Orr, founding member of JVAS:

Robert P. Mastos  
Ruth A. Mastos  
Mike and Laura Jackson

Gail Flegal  
Rebecca Lee Joseph  
George Mahon



**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!**

