

The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

Vol. LV, No. 3 September – October 2022

Published bimonthly (except for July and August)

as a benefit for members of the

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



www.JVAS.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by John Carter

Dear JVAS Community,

As the summer months slip away and we venture into autumn where the leaves are painted with an assortment of colors, and the air becomes slightly crisper, we tend to revere this seasonal transition. Fall bird migrants will make their push to southern grounds in quest for longer and warmer days, and more opportunities for food.

English writer of the Victorian Era, John Ruskin, once said that, “*Nature is painting for us pictures of infinite beauty.*” As a devoted bird watcher and photographer, I am inspired by how wilderness presents breathtaking scenes that cannot be fully captured by a lens, but only with the eyes to behold in awe. This past summer I was fortunate to travel and bird the beautiful country of Honduras. I experienced many new bird sightings and exposure to a new culture. I look forward to presenting a program on the Honduras trip in September to JVAS. What moments and experiences will you remember from this summer?



L: The Knox & Kane Rail Trail – McKean Co., PA

R: James Farm Ecological Preserve – Ocean View, DE

-Photos by John Carter

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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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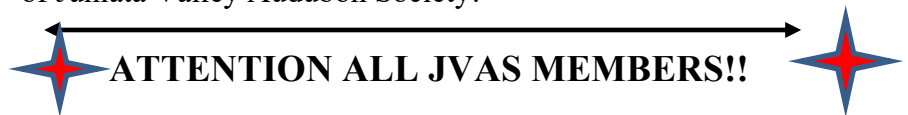
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, continued from page 1

I am very enthusiastic to embark on my second term as your JVAS President and along with the board, I look forward to partnering with you all on leading many new initiatives, events, conservation awareness and efforts, and educational programs with this outstanding community.

A few of the projects include:

- Chimney Swift tower and Purple Martin colony house constructions
- JVAS sticker design contest
- Ask Audubon Days - Native Plant Awareness
- 2023 Fall JVAS Kids Birding Festival
- And much, much more!

I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming field trips or programs in the coming year. Thank you for your continued support of Juniata Valley Audubon Society!



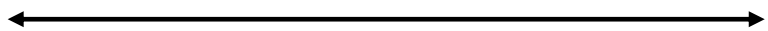
ATTENTION ALL JVAS MEMBERS!!

Due to an increase in postage and newsletter printing costs, we are asking members to sign up for the digital copy of The Gnatcatcher. It's easy to download from our website and, unlike the paper copy, it's in color. You can also click on hotlinks. Check it out at

www.jvas.org/gnatcatcher-archive/

Please send your email address with a request for the digital Gnatcatcher to:

JVAS771@GMAIL.COM. We will not share it with anyone.



Kudos to JVAS Member Sam Dietze!

Sam's oil painting, "Interstellar Filaments" shown below, was published in the July issue of the *Astronomy Magazine*. Sam described his painting as an "expressionistic image depicting one possible gas flowing through the early universe." Don't miss a solo exhibit of his works planned for **February 2023** at the Bellefonte Art Museum in Centre County. See more of Sam's paintings on page 7.



JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY EVENING PROGRAMS

will be HYBRID: in person and by Zoom

Note: Follow these instructions for the September and October 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**

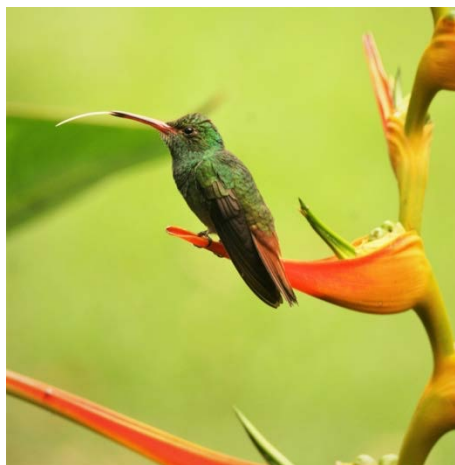
The In-person meetings will be at the Bellwood-Antis Library and start at 7 pm.
526 Main St. Bellwood, PA 16617

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM: Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2022 @ 7 pm via ZOOM and In Person at the Bellwood-Antis Library

"A Journey to Honduras" by John Carter

Join us as we take an adventure through photos and videos of a recent trip John Carter took to the beautiful country of Honduras. You will see photos and videos of different species of hummingbirds, toucans, kingfishers, trogons, motmots, and other plants and animals. Also learn about the Marcala birding club of Honduras, the Mayan City of Copan, different types of foods and much more!

John lives in the Blair Co. area. He has worked for Penn State World Campus as an Assistant Director for Academic Advising for the last 8 years. John received his Master's in Counselor Education from IUP. He absolutely loves bird watching and learning about bird behavior and how we can conserve natural habitats. John enjoys the outdoors, kayaking, hiking, fishing, and photography.



(L) Portrait of a Scarlet Macaw - the national bird of Honduras

(R) Rufous-tailed Hummingbird – a common hummingbird in forest edges and gardens

-Photos by John Carter

OCTOBER PROGRAM: Tuesday, OCT. 18, 2022 @ 7 pm via ZOOM and In Person at the Bellwood-Antis Library at 526 Main Street, Bellwood, PA.

- 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

“A Summer with the Tides: Fieldwork in the Saltmarshes of NJ” by Carl Engstrom



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The saltmarshes of the Mid-Atlantic are a dynamic and harsh environment that are home to some very unique species. This delicate habitat is in constant threat from human encroachment and is now in danger of being lost permanently by global sea level rise. The Saltmarsh Sparrow is found nowhere else in the world and, as a result, is perhaps the bird species most at risk of extinction in the Lower 48. Last summer, Carl was fortunate enough to spend time working in this special ecosystem in New Jersey conducting point counts for the Saltmarsh Habitat and Avian Research Program (SHARP) to gain a better understanding on population levels for various bird species that rely on saltmarshes. This presentation will cover Carl’s work and aim to provide a better understanding of saltmarsh habitat and the birds that call them home. A special focus will be placed on the Saltmarsh Sparrow and the threats that they face.

Growing up in State College, Carl has been fascinated by birds his entire life. One of his first experiences with the birding community was helping with the Culp Christmas Bird Count on the Bonta’s property with his dad at the age of ten. He has participated in the count every year since. It’s an annual tradition that he always looks forward to. In addition to birding for enjoyment, Carl has worked several field jobs with birds over the last few years. He spent two summers in college working with Penn State graduate students studying Wood Thrush nest site selection in Centre, Blair, and Huntingdon Counties. Last summer he worked in coastal New Jersey conducting point counts to census populations of Saltmarsh and Seaside Sparrows. After graduating from Penn State in the spring, he worked out in Montana on a project investigating the impacts of conifer encroachment on nest success in sagebrush nesting bird species. Currently Carl is the inaugural morning flight counter at Dan's Rock along the Allegheny Front in western Maryland working to gain a better understanding on bird migration in the Appalachians. Carl plans to continue bird research in graduate school and hopes to make bird research a career.

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.

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

Check the appropriate box:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership, \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the JVAS, \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership, \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership, \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Membership, \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership, \$500 |

Membership Year runs from January 1st to December 31st

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/

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.

FALL FIELD TRIPS 2022



Birding the Bells Gap Rail Trail the first Tues. of each month: 10-noon: 9/6, 10/4, 11/1, 12/6

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. Meet at the pavilion. Contact trip leader, John Carter at 814-933-7426 or email carter0206@aol.com, if you have questions.

Nocturnal Flight Call Workshop - Live from Plummer's Hollow:

Night of Saturday, Sept. 24 and/or morning of Sunday, Sept. 25, 2022

Did you know that the night skies are filled with migrating birds?

Using a specialized microphone and software, it is possible to detect and identify them by their Nocturnal Flight Calls (NFCs)!

This **by-reservation-only** workshop introduces the complex process of capturing and identifying what is flying during the height of the Fall Migration.

Several options are available: The first part of the workshop starts at 6 PM on Saturday.

You can 1) attend, return home, and come back at 3 AM; 2) stay all night, camping out under the stars, in your car, or under a roof; 3) come at 3 AM.

Where to meet: Park and Ride, East 10th St, Tyrone, PA 16686. More instructions will be provided.

What to bring: Warm clothes, beverages/snacks, gear for overnight camping (optional), binoculars. If you would like to sign up (first-come, first serve), please contact Mark Bonta at 814-600-8394, markabonta@yahoo.com, as soon as possible, as space is limited.

See More Field Trips on page 6



The 250-Million-Year-Long Field Trip: Sunday, Oct. 23: 8 AM – 5 PM. Rain or shine.

Join geographer Mark Bonta for a driving tour through 250 million years of Central Pennsylvania history. We will visit roadcuts and other exposed geological features between Eden Hill and the Allegheny Front, starting in the Cambrian and ending in the Pennsylvanian Periods.

Where to meet: Park and Ride, East 10th St, Tyrone, PA 16686.

What to bring: comfortable walking shoes, rain gear (if necessary), warm clothes, lunch and snacks.

What to expect: short drives, and relatively easy walks, mostly on flat surfaces.

If you would like to sign up (first come, first serve), please contact Mark Bonta at 814-600-8394, markabonta@yahoo.com, as soon as possible, as space is limited.

IMPORTANT: participants are limited to 3 vehicles only, because of narrow places for pull-offs. You must be willing to carpool using your own car or riding with someone else. Total participants around 12.



2nd Annual Halloween Bird Hike around Shawnee Lake, Bedford Co. Sunday Oct. 30



Feel free to wear a costume for the walk around the entire lake which is approximately 4 miles.

When: Sunday, October 30 from 9 AM -12 Noon

Where to meet: Shawnee SP; #2 Picnic Area Access parking lot, Schellsburg, PA 15559

What to bring: Binoculars, good walking shoes, water and snacks

Contact trip leader, John Carter, if you have questions: at 814-933-7426 email carter0206@aol.com.

Pop-up Tyrone Golden Eagle viewing (sign-up list only)

Not the team but the bird! Up to 29 Golden Eagles have been sighted along Brush Mt in the Tyrone area in a single day in early December! A very small number of people will be able to access a private deck in Tyrone with a sweeping view of the Tyrone Gap, to tally eagles - weather permitting.

When: weekends between November 19 and December 11.

Exact days and times depend on the weather and the host's availability, so it is important to be flexible. If you are signed up, you will be contacted for confirmation; preferred dates will be considered.

Where to meet: Park and Ride, East 10th St, Tyrone, PA 16686.

What to bring: Spotting scope, binoculars, folding deck chair. Bathroom, kitchen, and inside space (warm) available. Must be able to climb steep stairs to the second floor.

If you would like to sign-up for a chance to view the "Tyrone Golden Eagles," contact Mark Bonta at 814-600-8394, email markabonta@yahoo.com.



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. Rutters submitted their application to the Huntingdon Co. Conservation District, and it's being reviewed by DEP.

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/271112655092285>

Send your concerns about potential water pollution to DEP:

Scott Williamson
Regional Program Manager
S. Central Regional Office
909 Elmerton Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: 717-705-4799
scwilliams@pa.gov

Ask DEP to require an individual permit for this project and schedule a public hearing so our concerns can be raised.

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 Pinecroft, 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 President John Carter and other local conservation groups participated in a DEP public hearing to share water pollution concerns. A decision from DEP is pending.

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

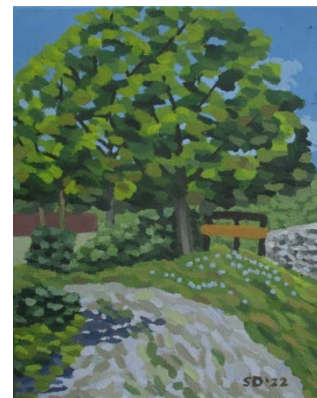
The Hegins Township Zoning Board denied the application on Jan. 11, 2022, but the developer has appealed to the County Court of Common Pleas. There is a major standoff between the developer and the Fort Indiantown Gap, which maintains that wind turbines will reduce needed air space and put pilots at risk. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not issued an opinion yet, but the project was recently withdrawn from the PJM Grid application process, so that's good news!



More paintings by Sam Dietze – inspired by JVAS 2022 field trips

L: Bell's Gap Trail in May
Acrylic on canvas 14" x 11"

R: Tree at the Jackson's in May
Acrylic on canvas 14" x 11"



Juniata Valley Audubon Society Sticker Design Contest:

JVAS is having a sticker design contest and we want you to submit your best effort that resembles the mission of our amazing Audubon chapter!

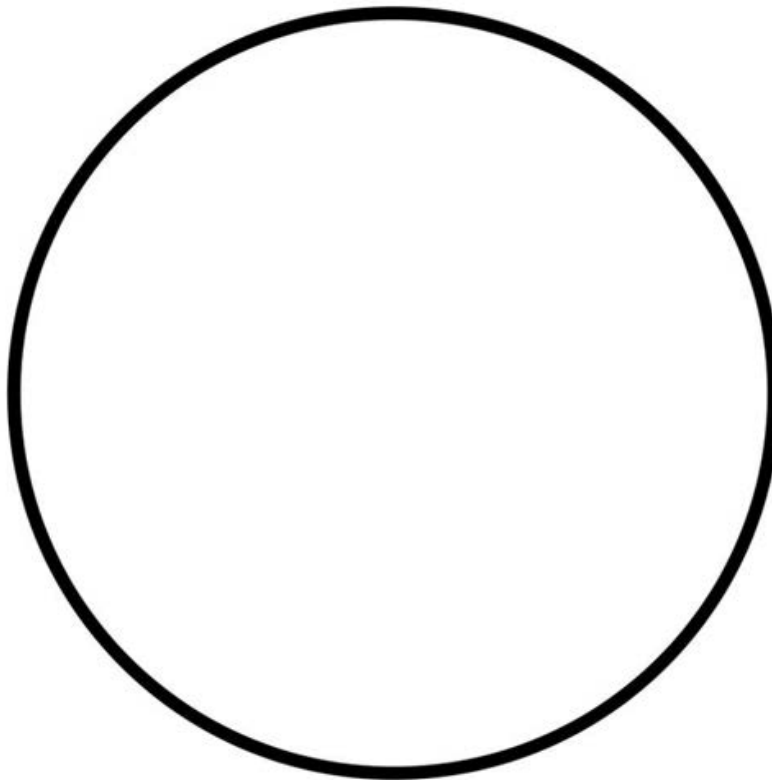
Contest Deadline: Entries must be received no later than **December 31, 2022**.

Subject Matter: Read and understand all the contest rules before creating a design. The design must be the artist's original creation and shall not be copied or duplicated.

- Design must be the same size and shape as circle below (4 in. x 4 in.).
- **MUST USE: JVAS.ORG** within the design.
- All colors must be flat and solid, with no shading, blending or halftones.
- Do not use a signature.

Entries may be submitted in one of two ways:

1. Send in via regular mail. The completed contest entry form must be included, and design sent to: ***Juniata Valley Audubon Society -- PO Box 1031 -- Altoona, PA 16603***
2. Save design file electronically (PNG or JPG). Electronic signatures are accepted on the entry form. Attach both the design file and the contest entry form to an email and send to: **carter0206@aol.com**



ENTRY AGREEMENT

I, the artist, hereby enter into this agreement with the Juniata Valley Audubon Society, hereinafter referred to as the JVAS, and submit an original design to the JVAS sticker design contest subject to all the following conditions.

1. This entry is of my own creation and is not copied, manipulated, or duplicated from previously published photographs, artwork or electronic graphic images.
2. I understand that no prizes other than recognition will be awarded.
3. JVAS is not liable for any damage to or for the loss of any entry submitted by an artist. Insuring the entry, if desired, is the responsibility of the artist.
4. The artwork may be copied or reproduced, and the admission stickers may be provided to the public by JVAS. Reproductions of any artwork submitted may be published or otherwise reproduced by the JVAS for the distribution to others for copying and may be used for informational and educational purposes.
5. Any and all reproductions or copies of the design made or authorized by JVAS may identify the artist at the JVAS's discretion.
6. I verify that no copyright infringements have been made by my design and acknowledge that I am liable for falsifying information.

I verify that I have read and comply with all the contest rules

Print Name:

Email:

Signature:

Date:

JVAS and LENCA COFFEE ROASTERS CELEBRATE 8 YEARS AS PARTNERS TO HELP BIRDS



Painting by Michael Kensinger, JVAS Member

Can you identify these warblers? They are all neotropical migrants that spend most of their lives “wintering” in Central or South America. According to National Audubon, all four have been observed in shade-grown coffee farms. They actually spend a very short time in Pennsylvania and other areas of North America, where they breed and raise their young.

From Left to Right: the Hooded Warbler migrates to Central America. The wintering range of the Black-and-White Warbler extends from Mexico to northern South America. The Magnolia Warbler flies to Central America and the Caribbean, while the Kentucky Warbler winters from Mexico to northern South America.

Many neotropical migrants use shade-grown coffee plantations, since the coffee is grown under the canopy of the forest, providing ample insect food and cover. That’s why JVAS partners with Emilio Garcia to help sell his single-origin coffee that is shade-grown in Honduras, using organic practices.

Sun coffee requires pesticides and is grown in plantations where the natural habitat has been destroyed.



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.

If you’d like to roast your own, Emilio sells green coffee beans through <https://lencafarms.com>

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

