

The Gnatcatcher

Newsletter of Juniata Valley Audubon

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JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY



www.JVAS.org

President's Message

Late summer has a rhythm all its own—a softer, slower pulse than the bright urgency of June. Goldfinches linger longer on their perches, the sun's arc dips just a little lower in the sky, and the air, while still warm, carries the faintest whisper of cooler days ahead. Meadows are now stippled with goldenrod and asters, and evenings glow with the chorus of katydids and crickets.

As August leans into September, nature reminds us once again of the beauty of change. Warblers begin their quiet southbound journeys, dressed in the subdued “incognito” plumage that can frustrate even the most skilled birders. While part of the heart misses summer's full symphony, there is a new music—its instruments changed, but its melody no less lovely.

The lively chorus of birdsong now mingles with the rasping rhythms of insects, carrying me back to my “back to school” childhood memories. I heard my first katydid of the year on July 21, calling outside my bathroom window. Dog-day harvest flies (annual cicadas) shimmer like green chrome in the heat of the day, clinging to the dry teasel stalks at Grazierville Wetland. And even as I type these words, a monarch butterfly dances among Tim's and my flowers.



Photo - Laura Jackson

Though many “fair weather” birds have departed, the stage is far from empty. American Goldfinches perch atop sunflowers that bow in the afternoon light. Thistle blooms alongside the asters and coneflowers I treasure each year. Cedar Waxwing flocks swell once more, and somewhere a Mourning Dove may still be tending a late-season brood. As naturalists and nature-snoopers, we understand that every ending is also a beginning. One bird departs, another arrives—and I'm already looking forward to the return of our fantastic winter birds.

Inside this issue of The Gnatcatcher, you'll find an exciting lineup of fall guest speakers and field trips to enjoy. And yes, I'm already anticipating one of my favorite traditions: the Christmas Bird Count. Our Sinking Valley team always has a wonderful time—it's a highlight of the holidays for me.

In these moments between seasons, may we hold on to what summer has given us: the warmth of long days, the laughter shared on a trail or by a riverside, and the steady heartbeat of wild places. And may we step into autumn with hope—hope that the work we do for conservation ripples outward like circles on a pond, touching lives we may never see. Wherever you find yourself in the coming weeks—whether walking through sunlit fields, standing under a sky thick with migrating swallows, or simply watching the world change outside your window—know that your care for nature is an act of love. It is a gift to the next season, and to the next generation. Each and every one of you makes a difference.

Warm regards,

Michael Kensinger
President, JVAS

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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).

OFFICERS

President, Michael Kensinger

- ◆ 814-505-3410
- ◆ michaelkensinger@gmail.com

Vice President, Catie Farr

- ◆ 570-651-3839
- ◆ catiekg5059@gmail.com

Secretary, Connor Schmitt

- ◆ 814-502-4204
- ◆ ceschmitts12@gmail.com

Treasurer, Justin Merry

- ◆ 814-932-5599
- ◆ justinmerry@gmail.com

Immediate Past President, Mark Bonta

- ◆ 814-600-8394
- ◆ markabonta@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership, Denice Rodaniche

- ◆ 814-502-8431
- ◆ denicrod@outlook.com

Conservation, Laura Jackson

- ◆ 814-494-4439
- ◆ jacksonlaura73@gmail.com

Partners in Neotropical Bird Conservation,

- ◆ Laura Jackson

Education, Jody Wallace

- ◆ 814-932-8356
- ◆ creatureteach@aol.com

Field Trips, Justin Merry

Publications & Publicity, Michael Kensinger

Hospitality, Susan Braun

- ◆ 814-574-0795
- ◆ Braun3112@gmail.com

Historian, Mike Jackson

- ◆ 814-494-3631
- ◆ mljackson2@icloud.com

Website Administrator, Dave Bonta

- ◆ 814-686-7274
- ◆ dave.bonta@yahoo.com

The Gnatcatcher Editor, Laura Jackson

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

- ◆ Warren Baker
- ◆ Sharon Clewell



Photo-Laura Jackson

Emilio Garcia (shown above), his brother Carlos and sister Doris, produce **Smithsonian-certified Bird Friendly® coffee near Marcala, Honduras, which is certified organic and grown under the native tree canopy, providing food and a safe habitat for birds. The new label for the Bird Friendly® coffee is, “Los Robles,” which means, “The Oaks.” Emilio is the only farmer who is also certified as a roaster in the program.**

SHADE-GROWN coffee farmers like Emilio Garcia don't use pesticides and often create compost to naturally fertilize the coffee shrubs. Emilio plants his coffee shrubs on the forest floor, under the canopy of native trees. This means there are a lot of insects for birds to eat. Researchers have found that many of our songbirds spend the winter in **SHADE-GROWN** coffee farms, feasting on insects and protected by native vegetation.

Celebrate Earth Day Every Day - Drink Bird Friendly® Coffee

Emilio Garcia, our partner who produces bird friendly coffee on his farm 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>** Order the Los Robles coffee if you want the single origin, direct trade coffee that is certified Bird Friendly®.

Click on “Shop Now” to order the Los Robles coffee.

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!

JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY EVENING PROGRAMS

Join us at the Bellwood-Antis Library, 526 Main St. Bellwood, PA

First Fall Evening Program 6 PM: Free Dinner 7 PM: Program

Join us on Tuesday, September 16, at the Bellwood-Antis Library for our first fall evening meeting. Come early at 6 PM to enjoy a free dinner, courtesy of our Hospitality Chair Susan Braun, with the help of other excellent cooks. We'll provide turkey chili, corn bread, side dishes, and dessert. Vegan and gluten-free options will be available. Enjoy some free hot "Bird Friendly" Los Robles coffee, that's good for you and good for the birds! It's shade-grown, organic coffee produced without any pesticides. Bags will also be for sale: 2-lb ground or whole bean: \$32, 12-oz. ground or whole bean: \$16, plus decaf from Columbia. (12 oz. ground for \$16)



An Overview of the PA Game Commission's Research on Wild Turkeys



with Tony Musselman and Anya Watts, PA Game Commission

Tony and Anya will discuss wild turkey ecology and their field research on wild turkeys. Tony is an avid turkey hunter (ask him about his adventures!) and has been the lead for the central PA research team since the start of the project. Anya interned with the PGC, graduated from Penn State shortly after, and joined the research team in 2023. Following the presentation, audience members are welcome to try research techniques using their equipment. No live birds will be used.

← Tuesday, Oct. 21 Meeting starts at 7 pm, but come early to enjoy snacks, hot Los Robles coffee, and to socialize! →

Legal Shifts and Local Songbirds: Navigating New Environmental Protections in Pennsylvania with Attorney Schawnne Kilgus

In recent years, both the Federal and Pennsylvania state governments have made important changes to the environmental laws and policies that directly affect native bird populations and their habitats. This presentation breaks down what has changed, including federal rollbacks and the dismantling of protections, state initiatives for native plants and wildlife, environmental rights cases, and enforcement. We will focus on what these legal shifts mean for birds in our state and practical steps we can take to help ensure a bright future for Pennsylvania's avian wildlife.

← Mark Your Calendar: Tuesday, Nov. 18 Evening Program at 7 pm (presenter TBD) →



Saturday, Dec. 20: Culp Christmas Bird Count and Tally Dinner

Contact Compilers Mark Bonta or Susan Braun if you'd like to help count birds in the Culp Circle and/or attend the Tally Dinner (location to be determined). You don't have to be a counter to attend the dinner.

Mark Bonta: Call 814-600-8394 or email markabonta@yahoo.com
Susan Braun: Call 814-574-0795 or email braun3112@gmail.com

JVAS FIELD TRIPS FALL 2025

Contact Field Trip Chair Justin Merry if you have any suggestions for field trip locations, questions about a trip, or would like to lead a trip. Contact Justin at justinmerry@gmail.com

*The Field Trip Chair also reserves the right to cancel any field trip last minute in the interest of safety of our participants. We encourage you to call or text if you are ever in doubt that a field trip is taking place.

FIRST TUESDAY WALK: Sept. 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2 from 10 AM to NOON
Birding the Ray Amato Memorial Trail behind the Northern Blair County Recreation Center

Address for Northern Blair County Rec Center (NBCRC): 4080 E Pleasant Valley Blvd, Altoona, Pa.

Leader: Connor Schmitt, 814-502-4204 or cschmitts12@gmail.com

Join JVAS Secretary Connor Schmitt to explore the nature trail that runs behind Northern Blair Recreational Center in Tipton, PA. Enjoy an easy-grade hike, where you will enjoy a variety of habitats including streamside (Little Juniata River), wetland (Robert P. Brooks Wetland), meadow, and forest. This location is always a great place for birding due to the myriad of habitats. Even the NBCRC's soccer field boasts Killdeer, Canada Geese, Eastern Bluebirds, and other birds that like a more open area.

What to bring: Please wear clothing suitable for weather conditions. Snack/drink. Binoculars if you have them. No dogs are permitted on the nature trail.



R: During June's First Tuesday Walk, Connor Schmitt, Justin Merry, and Jessica Zabinsky observed this Red-headed Woodpecker being chased off by a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers that had a nest nearby.

L: This surprised fawn was an unexpected sighting!

Photos – Connor Schmitt



What is it? Clues: yellow slippers, 2 distinct wing bars, streak through eye, yellow wash on throat.

Answer on page 7

Photo – Laura Jackson



Saturday, September 20, 9 am – 11 am

Confusing Fall Warblers on the Lower Trail

Leader Justin Merry: 814-932-5599 or justinmerry@gmail.com

Join us for a fall walk along the Lower Trail at the wonderful Mt. Etna station. Fall Warblers should be passing through on their way south for the winter, dressed in a dizzying array of plumage that often looks nothing like their spring attire! Mt. Etna is a local warbler hotspot, with summertime populations of many species that nest along the Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River. It is among the best sites in the area for Cerulean Warblers. We expect to see many warbler species and maybe will even identify a few! We'll have a great time either way.

What to bring or wear: dress for the weather and bring water and a hat. We will take our time and mostly stick to the flat trail, which is covered in fine gravel. There may be an optional trek into a less-improved trail that loops around a peninsula. This will depend on the conditions and those in attendance.

Meeting location: The Mt. Etna station parking lot is on Fox Run Rd, just north of the intersection with Polecat Hollow Rd. Use this link to find it: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/6CFiNhJgbgtEd4HY6>
Or these coordinates: 40.52047295797705, -78.1719163510978

JVAS FIELD TRIPS FALL 2025



Sunday, October 5, 9 am – 3 pm: Hike in Plummer's Hollow

Leaders Dave & Marcia Bonta, 814-660-9638 or dave.bonta@yahoo.com

Join us for a 4.5-mile hike in Plummer's Hollow, sharing perspectives on forest health, climate change and biodiversity issues, for a Walk in Penns' Woods

(<https://paforestry.org/walk-in-penns-woods>) on Sunday, October 5. We'd love to have JVAS members along to help us ID things! We'll meet at 9:00 a.m. at the bottom of Plummer's Hollow Road, just across the railroad tracks from Rt. 453, walk up the road to the top of the watershed, eat lunch at the scenic vista, and walk back through the oak-heath woods on the southeast side of the hollow, keeping an eye out for migratory birds and fall foliage.



The 2022 Plummer's Hollow Walk was wet and wild! We didn't let a little bit of rain stop us from exploring. -Photos Laura Jackson

What to bring: Bring a lunch, drink, and rain gear, if necessary.

Wear an orange hat or vest – it's hunting season.

Meeting directions: From Altoona, take I-99 North to Tyrone exit 48. Take a left, then a right onto PA-453 South for 0.3 miles, turn right onto Plummer's Hollow Road and cross the river and train tracks.

Saturday, October 11, 9 am – 3 pm: Old Bedford Village Meadow and Shawnee State Park

Leaders Mike and Laura Jackson, 814-494-4439 or jacksonlaura73@gmail.com



We'll explore a 6-acre meadow at Old Bedford Village (OBV) that the Bedford County Bird and Nature Club is managing as a wildlife sanctuary for the OBV, with funds donated by the community and Juniata Valley Audubon Society. There is a nice walking trail along one edge of the meadow and a grassy path through the middle of it. We'll look for insects, fall flowers, and birds. Then we'll drive to Shawnee State Park for a picnic lunch (bring your own). After lunch, we will explore Shawnee State Park by walking the Colvin Trail and checking the lake for birds.

What to bring or wear: dress for the weather and bring water, hat, and a picnic lunch (to eat at Shawnee State Park). Both places offer level walkways, and we'll go slowly as we search for nature's wonders.

Meeting location: Old Bedford Village, 220 Sawblade Road, Bedford, PA

(Allow about 40 minutes from Altoona to OBV): Take I-99 south from Altoona to exit #1 (same as the exit to the turnpike), then turn Right onto

Business 220 for 1.3 miles. Old Bedford Village is on the Right – cross through the covered bridge and park in the large paved parking lot on the left beyond the OBV entrance. You will not have to pay an entrance fee. Then we'll drive to Shawnee State Park (about 20 minutes from OBV) to eat lunch and explore that park. Shawnee State Park address: 132 State Park Rd, Schellsburg, PA 15559. We will meet in the large parking lot by the boat rental and walk to a nearby pavilion or picnic tables for lunch.

JVAS FIELD TRIPS FALL 2025

Saturday, November 1, 10 am – 1 pm: Allegheny Front Hawk Watch

Leader Justin Merry, 814-932-5599 or justinmerry@gmail.com



Join us for a hawk watch! The Allegheny Front Hawk Watch is located just over an hour away from Altoona and is situated along an important migration corridor. A variety of raptors and other birds might be spotted from this site as we hunker down in the cold weather to watch them pass. We may have a chance to see Golden Eagles!

What to bring: Be prepared for cold weather. Dress warmly with a coat, hat, and gloves, and bring blankets, sleeping bags, and chairs. Handwarmers, coffee, snacks, and other warm items are also a good idea. Binoculars will be helpful to view birds that pass close by, and we'll have spotting scopes available to look at birds further way. We also recommend a camera as the views can be breathtaking! A porta-potty is available.

Expert counters will be present to help identify birds.

Directions from Altoona to the Hawk Watch, 283 Raptor Road, Schellsburg, Pa:

- Take I-99 South of Exit 3, then take a LEFT then a RIGHT to get on 56 East (Pensyl Hollow Road)
- Follow Pensyl Hollow Road to Rt. 30 and turn RIGHT to go west to Schellsburg, Pa
- At the traffic light in Schellsburg, turn RIGHT onto Route 96 NORTH
- Travel 2.9 miles on 96 NORTH to Hoover Road
- Turn LEFT on to Hoover Road
- Travel a short distance and turn RIGHT on to Shaffer Mountain Road
- Follow Shaffer Mountain Road for 6.6 miles (Do NOT take Lambert Mtn. Road – it isn't safe!) Shaffer Mountain Road is very windy - go slow.
- At the "T", turn LEFT on to Lambert Mountain Road (this part is safe)
- Travel 0.5 miles on this dirt road to the entrance of the Hawk Watch, on the RIGHT
- Turn RIGHT and pass through the BLUE GATE (if the gate is closed, then the Hawk Watch is closed)
- Continue driving down the narrow lane to the parking area – then a short walk to the viewing area

Saturday, Nov 15: 9 am – 12 pm: Bald Eagle State Park Birding

Leader Sue Braun, 814-574-0795 or braun3112@gmail.com



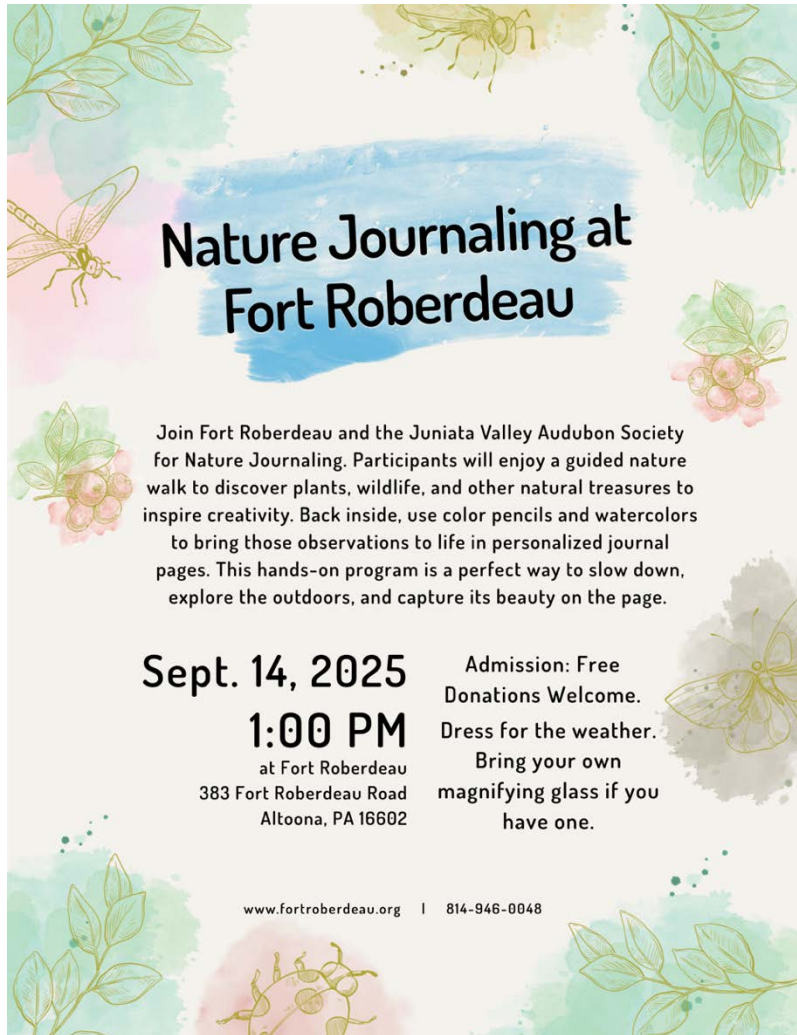
Canvasback Photo-Sue Braun

Let's explore Bald Eagle State Park to look for migrating waterfowl, hawks and more. The 5,900-acre Bald Eagle State Park is in the broad Bald Eagle Valley in Centre County. It includes a lake along Bald Eagle Mountain which is surrounded by forests, fields and wetlands. We'll stop at several places within the park and may walk some of the trails. We'll finish by driving to Sayer's dam and take a short walk on an old road to Hunter's Run Cove. Walking will mostly be on flat, mowed trails or old roads.

What to bring: binoculars, spotting scope (optional), drinks, and snacks

Meeting location: Meet at the beach area at Bald Eagle State Park <https://maps.app.goo.gl/zBoRti9XErci8kfQA>

SPECIAL COMMUNITY EVENTS



Nature Journaling at Fort Roberdeau

Join Fort Roberdeau and the Juniata Valley Audubon Society for Nature Journaling. Participants will enjoy a guided nature walk to discover plants, wildlife, and other natural treasures to inspire creativity. Back inside, use color pencils and watercolors to bring those observations to life in personalized journal pages. This hands-on program is a perfect way to slow down, explore the outdoors, and capture its beauty on the page.

Sept. 14, 2025
1:00 PM
 at Fort Roberdeau
 383 Fort Roberdeau Road
 Altoona, PA 16602

Admission: Free
 Donations Welcome.
 Dress for the weather.
 Bring your own magnifying glass if you have one.

www.fortroberdeau.org | 814-946-0048



CommUNITY Events Committee of Duncansville

Join Us To Celebrate The Paw Paw

2ND ANNUAL PAW PAW FEST - 2025

Saturday, September 21st 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 Duncansville Memorial Park

What to expect:

- Information about the Paw Paw fruit.
- Paw Paw Trees and other plants for sale.
- Lots of Vendors including crafts, retail, food & more.
- Uniquely curated food and beverages made from Paw Paw fruit
- Speakers and entertainment

From page 4: This confusing fall warbler is a **Blackpoll Warbler**
 Photographed by Laura Jackson on her bubbling boulder just outside her kitchen window.



How to prepare for the Sept. 20 Confusing Fall Warblers Field Trip

Download the free **Fall Warbler ID Guide** from Cornell Bird Lab:
<https://dl.allaboutbirds.org/fall-warbler-guide>



Tennessee Warbler
 Photo courtesy of
 Cornell Bird Lab



814-946-0048 | 383 Fort Roberdeau Road Altoona, PA 16602

JVAS Merch is now Available Online!



**All orders are processed on the 1st and 16th of every month.
Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery after processing dates.**

**You can support JVAS and add quality bird-themed pieces
to your wardrobe at our online store!**

<http://www.juniatavalleyaudubonsociety.deco-apparel.com/>

We have a variety of shirts and hats available for purchase featuring a beautiful design by Michael Kensinger. More designs will be added in the coming months!

You can have items shipped to you or pick them up at Damin Printing Co., our local business partner, located at 122 S. Locust Street, Ebensburg.

JVAS Shorebird Fieldtrip by Sue Braun

On July 23-25, 2025, eight JVAS members journeyed to the Delaware bayshore for a few days of shorebirding. Our primary focus was Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Smyrna, Del. We also visited several other state and national wildlife refuges. Bombay Hook NWR is a great choice for a shorebirding trip because the impoundments are managed in a way to create mudflats that provide migrating shorebirds a place to feed and rest during migration. When high tide is rising, thousands of shorebirds will move into the impoundments to feed, and some are fairly close to the road.

Shorebirds are one of the hardest groups of birds to identify. They do migrate through Central Pa., but they aren't very common, so we don't get a chance to become familiar with them. Size, shape, and foraging behavior are some of the clues used for identification. However, size can be hard to determine unless there is another bird nearby to use for comparison. The difference in plumages can be very subtle; there is a lot of variation from breeding to wintering plumage. And the difference in the plumage of some species is similar. Plus, their colors can be hard, if not impossible, to see. Is that mud on the legs of that sandpiper, or does it really have black legs? And all of this can be happening when the shorebirds are too far away to see clearly.

Add in the heat, sun and insects on a July day, and it makes you wonder, why does anyone strive to see shorebirds? Because shorebird migration is epic - many fly thousands of miles from their wintering grounds in Central and South America to their breeding grounds in the Arctic. They quickly raise their young and turn around to fly south again. Even if we could not identify many of the birds we were seeing, we could witness this miracle of migration and ponder the struggles these birds go through for survival.

A few photo highlights taken by JVAS members on the trip:

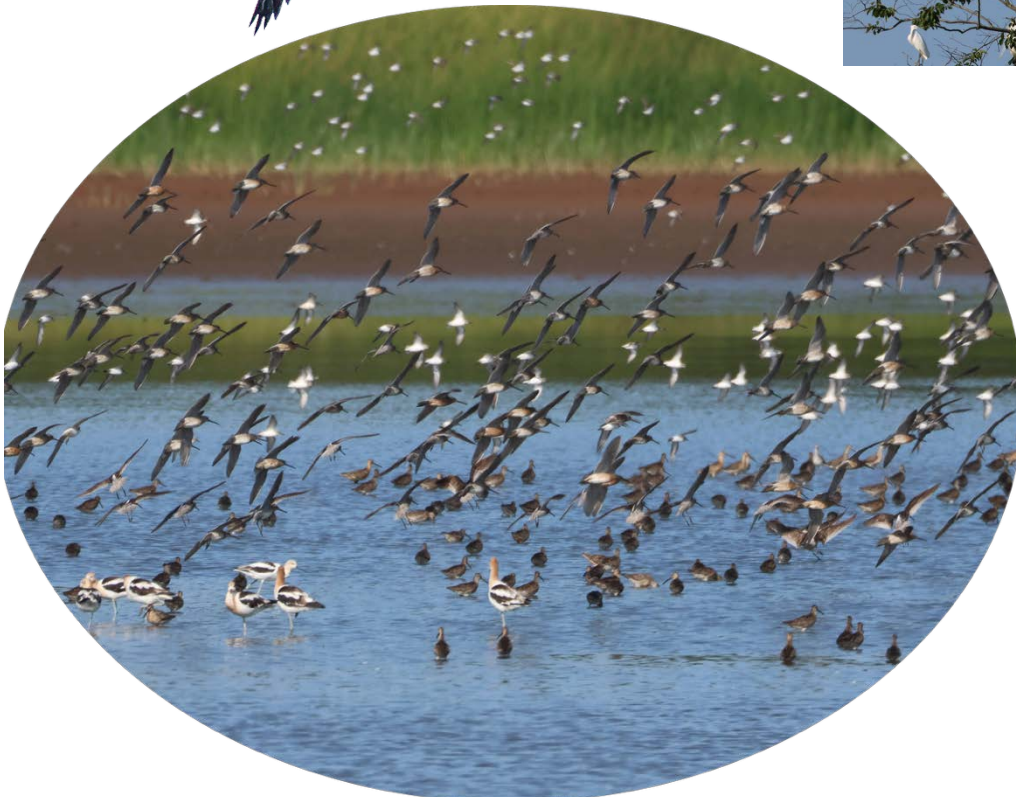


Above: Egrets clustered in tree tops in the early morning.

Photo – Amy McNutt

Upper left: Sue told us to look up if shorebirds suddenly take flight – and sure enough, there was a Peregrine Falcon flying overhead.

Photo – Mike Jackson



Left: Unlike the smaller shorebirds, American Avocets (lower left in photo) did not take flight when the Peregrine Falcon flew overhead.

Photo– Amy McNutt

More Highlights of the July JVAS Shorebird Trip

Below L: Black Skimmers, uniquely adapted shorebirds, were a delight to watch as they skimmed the water for small fish. Photo-Justin Merry R: Laura Jackson and Justin Merry scanned Bombay Hook's colorful marshes, sloughs, and dark mudflats for wildlife. Photo-Sue Braun



Above L: American Avocets were engaging to watch as they preened in the marsh. We watched a lot of Short-billed Dowitchers as they probed for food in the mucky mud. Photos – Connor Schmitt



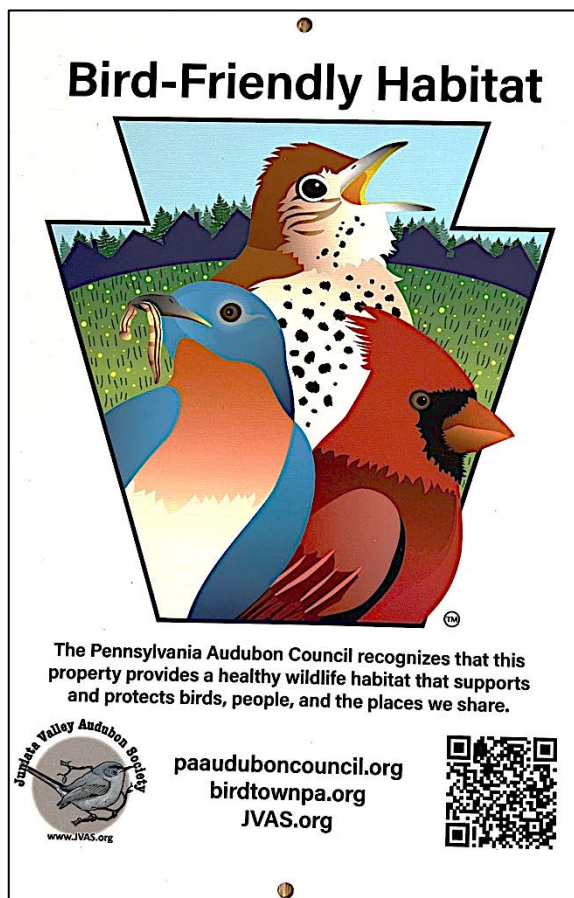
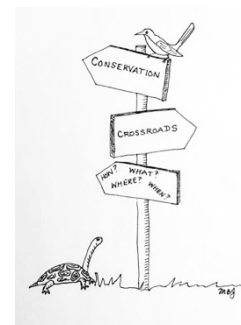
Finding Black-necked Stilts with babies was a highlight of the trip. Photo – Mike Jackson



Above: It was exciting to watch a Seaside Sparrow carrying food to its concealed nest. R: Greater Yellowlegs were somewhat drab in their fall plumage but still entertaining to watch. Photos- Justin Merry



CONSERVATION CROSSROADS is a section of *The Gnatcatcher* that features environmental issues across a spectrum of local, national, and global concerns. Contact Conservation Chair 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 then click on the Conservation tab.



BIRD-FRIENDLY HABITAT PROJECT (BFHP)

Would you like your property to be recognized for all the work you've done to make your home a healthy habitat for birds? JVAS is proud to be part of Pennsylvania Audubon Council's new program: Bird-Friendly Habitat Recognition Program. This is a new endeavor, modified and improved from an earlier project that is no longer supported by National Audubon. Note: this is a recognition, not a certification, project.

Be one of the first JVAS members to be recognized for providing food, native plants, water, and shelter for birds. Just point your cell phone's camera to the QR code on the photo of the sign to apply.

The sign measures 10" x 14" and has two holes so you can attach it to a post – please don't put it on a tree.

The cost is \$30, and you must pay online after you apply. If you can't post a sign in your yard, you will also receive a window sticker. Laura Jackson, BFHP coordinator for JVAS, will receive an email that you've applied and paid, so she will get in touch with you about the sign delivery. Signs will also be available at each JVAS meeting so you can pick up your sign at the meeting. Our next meeting is Sept. 16.

This program is open to all – please tell your neighbors about it. **Anyone who participates and isn't a member of JVAS, will receive a free year's membership as a bonus!!**

Editor's Note: With huge cuts to conservation, National Wildlife Refuges depend more than ever on public support.

A Small Shorebird, a Big Honor

artwork and article by Michael Kensinger

This year, I had one of those moments in my art career where I had to stop, breathe, and honestly pinch myself. I was asked to be the 2025 Federal Duck Stamp "Companion Species Artist," creating a drawing of a Black Turnstone (on right) to appear on this year's stamp.

The Black Turnstone is a small, hardy shorebird that shares habitat with the Spectacled Eider — the



winning species of the 2025 Federal Duck Stamp, masterfully painted by Adam Grimm. Since the Companion Species program began in 2015, it has featured birds that, while not waterfowl, also benefit from Duck Stamp conservation dollars. The goal is simple: to connect more birders and nature lovers with the stamp, because this program protects far more than ducks.

And the stakes could not be higher. Without the Federal Duck Stamp program, we could lose nearly seven million acres of wetland and grassland habitat. These are the places that sustain everything from nesting pintails to migrating sandpipers, from monarch butterflies to salamanders. The loss would be incalculable — not just for wildlife, but for everyone who finds meaning and joy in wild places.

That's why I'm encouraging everyone to visit www.duckstamp.com and buy a stamp — maybe more than one. At \$25, a remarkable 98 cents of every dollar goes directly toward the acquisition and protection of habitat. Few conservation tools in the world are that effective, and fewer still are stamps this beautiful or collectible.

In addition to the “back” of the single pane stamp, my Black Turnstone appears on the left-hand side of the commemorative “First Day of Sale Envelope”, also available on the website mentioned, along with the Federal Duck Stamp, a Manatee Stamp, and an ink stamp first day cancellation over those. These are collectible, and if you love wildlife and art this is a way you can make a massive impact without ever leaving your home. If you don't like to purchase online, you can also purchase the stamp from the Post Office, and some local sporting goods stores.

This September, I'll be heading to the Federal Duck Stamp Contest at the Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Maryland, where I'll be competing alongside hundreds of other waterfowl artists. This year's eligible species for the 7" x 10" paintings are Cinnamon Teal, Gadwall, Wood Duck, Bufflehead, or Ruddy Duck. The winning painting — the one that will appear on the 2026 stamp — will be announced at the contest, which you can also watch streamed live via the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service YouTube channel for those who desire to watch from home.

If you're within driving distance, I encourage you to come see the contest in person. Laurel offers excellent birding in and around Patuxent Refuge, and nearby spots like Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and Bombay Hook are migration hotspots in September. The area has a range of lodging options, from chain hotels in Laurel and Columbia to cozy B&Bs closer to the Chesapeake.

To be part of this history — to know my art is helping protect the places where birds like the Black Turnstone and Spectacled Eider still thrive — is an honor I will carry with me always. And I hope more people, whether hunters, birders, or simply lovers of open skies and wild marshes, will join in. Because every stamp purchased is a small promise to the future — a pledge that these places, and the creatures that depend on them, will still be here long after we're gone.

Do your part to protect our wetland and grassland habitats.

Buy a Federal Duck stamp today.

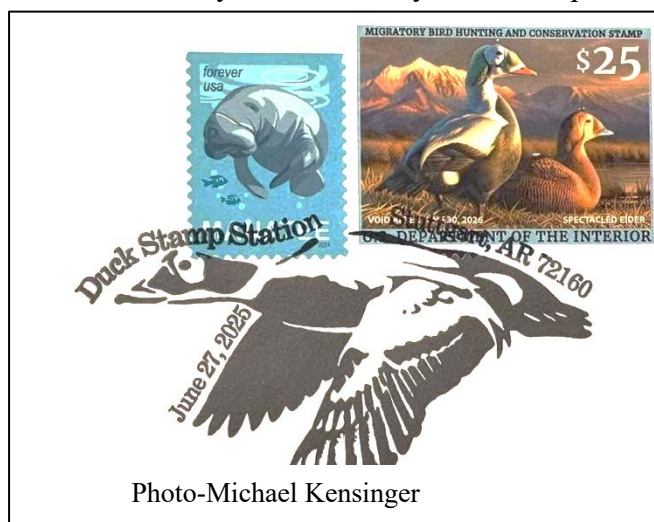


Photo-Michael Kensinger



www.JVAS.org

Exploring and Protecting Nature in Central Pennsylvania

President: Michael Kensinger

Secretary: Connor Schmitt

Vice-President: Catie Farr

Treasurer: Justin Merry

Address: P. O. Box 1013 Altoona, PA 16603

JOIN JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Message from Denise Rodaniche, JVAS Membership Chair:

Birds have a unique perspective of nature's grandeur, having witnessed it from the ground, sky, and all points in between. (Anonymous)


How wonderful it is to experience the wonder of nature with other birders and nature enthusiasts! JVAS invites you to renew your membership for 2026. Apply or renew now through December and your membership will be active for the coming year. We look forward to your participation in upcoming field trips, bird counts, and monthly meetings!

Your continued support will make a difference in our work to protect birds, their habitats, and the natural world we love. Even if you can't attend any of our activities, your membership provides important financial support. Please consider joining or renewing your Chapter-only membership in Juniata Valley Audubon Society.

Renewing members will continue to enjoy:

- 5 digital issues of our newsletter, *The Gnatcatcher*.
The March issue of *The Gnatcatcher* is the last issue if renewal is not paid by April 15.
- Local birding and community events
- A voice in the fight to protect birds and their habitats

If you join or renew your chapter membership on Sept. 1 or later, your membership is carried over for the entire following year.

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

Check the appropriate box:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership, \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend of the JVAS, \$55 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership, \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Membership, \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Membership, \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership, \$500 |

Membership Year runs from January 1st to December 31st

Make your check payable to the JUNIATA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail to:

Juniata Valley Audubon Society
P. O. Box 1013
Altoona, PA 16603



Point your phone's
camera at
this QR code to join online.

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail Address _____ (so we can send you *The Gnatcatcher*)