



# Kingfisher Courier

FEBRUARY | MARCH 2015

APPALACHIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## AAS PROGRAM | FEBRUARY

### The Wolf Sanctuary of PA

Did you know that there is a place in Pennsylvania where wolves and wolf hybrids are able to live safely and with dignity? For over 30 years the Wolf Sanctuary of Pennsylvania, owned



Solo (left) and Trinity at Wolf Sanctuary. Photo courtesy [www.wolfssanctuarypa.org](http://www.wolfssanctuarypa.org).

by the Darlington Family, has provided refuge to wolves who have found themselves without a place in the natural world. No wild wolves have been known to exist in this state for over 100 years. The sanctuary was originally created as a private rescue but has also developed into an educational facility. Located on over 20 acres of natural woodland in the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch Country, part of the mission is to provide the most comfortable and stimulating environment for the wolves.

The Wolves of Speedwell (as they are known) hold a unique position as ambassadors to the wild. It has been said that the best wolf habitat resides in the human heart. There are currently 46 wolves in residence who are given food, shelter and veterinary care with no government or corporate assistance. They are dependent on private donations to continue.

Our presenters are Patti and Denny Brinkley, who have been volunteering at the sanctuary for almost nine years. They perform a number of duties including providing food and water and conducting tours. They will be talking about the history of the sanctuary up to the present day, and the presentation will include two DVDs that provide additional information about the area.

Please plan on attending this very unusual program on Thursday, February 19. Our social time begins at 7:00pm followed by our monthly meeting at 7:30pm with announcements, bird chat, and of course our program.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**  
Thursday, February 19 @ 7:00pm

## AAS PROGRAM | MARCH

### Farmland Raptors: Their Conservation Status, Threats, and Ways You Can Help

Grassland birds have undergone declines across our state in recent years. Hawk Mountain's Farmland Raptors project has focused on gathering data on the distribution of four grassland raptors that have experienced declines in recent decades and on promoting the involvement of farmland owners in tracking and conserving these birds. The Short-eared Owl is extremely rare; the Northern Harrier and Barn Owl are in low numbers and the American Kestrel is much less common than it was fifteen years ago. In her talk, biologist Laurie Goodrich, PhD, will provide updates on the status and distribution of each of these species in Pennsylvania and share how the Farmland Raptor Project has worked with others to promote conservation efforts on private lands.

Laurie Goodrich has the distinction of being the first full-time research biologist hired by Hawk Mountain. She has been part of their staff for more than 25 years and oversees the sanctuary's long term migration monitoring programs, including the mammoth annual autumn hawk count and the sanctuary's natural history database. Laurie is also a skilled interpretive naturalist and helps to train volunteers in raptor identification.



Laurie Goodrich.

We know you will want to join us on March 19 for this program. Our social time begins at 7:00pm and at 7:30pm we will hold a brief meeting followed by the presentation.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Thursday, March 19 @ 7:00pm

# Birds at the State Museum of Pennsylvania

Join one of the special tours highlighting Pennsylvania's birds in the State Museum's third floor natural history galleries on Friday, February 20, from 5:30–8:00pm. Meet Dr. Irene Snavelly, author of a new *Pennsylvania Heritage* article on Alexander Wilson, America's first ornithologist. Beth Hager and Amy Hammond, curators of the museum's current exhibit, "A Fondness for Birds: Pennsylvania's Alexander Wilson," will also be on hand to discuss the exhibit.

Hailed as the first artist–writer to scientifically capture and document American birds in naturalistic poses, Wilson's published work preceded John James Audubon's famous illustrations by a decade. Also featured in the exhibit will be a number of bird specimens from the museum's Botany and Zoology collections, some of which date to the late 19th century.

This event is free and open to the public as part of Harrisburg's monthly **3rd in the Burg** arts and entertainment celebration. Refreshments will be served. The museum is located at 300 North Street, Harrisburg. More information at <http://statemuseumpa.org/events/>. The exhibit will continue for a year.



Birds on Display at the State Museum

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# Everyday Conservation Tips That Help the Environment

Sue Hannon, Conservation Chairperson

Reduce. Re-use. Recycle. It's the conservation mantra. We all know it. But how well are we following it? With a new year just begun, now is the perfect time to take a look at our conservation habits. Use the following list as a reminder of simple conservation habits that you can incorporate into your everyday life.

**1** Recycle paper, plastics, glass and metal every time. When you are away from home, carry your empties home with you if you can't find a recycling container.

**2** Find a local recycling center that will take recyclables that your community doesn't collect at the curb.

**3** Take your glossy newspaper inserts and magazines to the Ronald McDonald House. In addition to keeping these products out of the landfill, you will help this charity help families with seriously ill children.

**4** Reusable bags are not just for the grocery store. Take them with you whenever and wherever you shop.

**5** Wherever possible, use re-usable products instead of disposables. Use glass and stoneware instead of Rubbermaid. Instead of buying plastic storage totes, ask local retail stores for their discarded cardboard boxes, or put together a few wooden storage crates.

**6** Eat lower on the food chain. Meat is a good source of protein, but so are legumes and other grains. Cutting down on meat consumption is not only healthier for you, it is healthier for the environment.

**7** Shop locally. Sure you might save a few dollars on one thing at Store A, and a few more on another at Store B or Store C, but how much more gas are you using to travel between all these stores? Is it really worth it? Make a list of items you just cannot get at your local store, and limit your trips to other stores to once a month or every other month.

**8** Buy unprocessed foods, and buy organic or locally grown food products as much as possible. Processed foods tend to contain artificial additives to enhance flavor, appearance and texture and to keep them "fresh" longer. They may also contain fewer natural nutrients and fiber. The closer

your food is to its point of origin, the better. So buy ingredients instead of ready-made meals and look for locally grown and organic foods. Better yet, join a CSA and get your produce straight from the farm.

**9** Buy shade-grown coffee for home use, and ask for it wherever you buy coffee away from home. Audubon has several delicious flavors of shade-grown coffee in beans or ground, and my local Giant carries several brands with "shade-grown" included in the product description printed on the packaging. Even if your restaurant doesn't currently carry shade-grown coffee, if you keep asking for it, they may consider switching.

**10** Buy beer in bottles instead of cans. It takes about half as much energy to produce glass bottles as it does to produce cans.

**11** Plug your electronics and small kitchen appliances into a surge protector power strip and turn the strip off overnight or when appliances are not in use.

**12** Donate used clothing, books, electronics, etc. instead of discarding them. If you are looking at upgrading a product, find out if you can trade in your old item. Consider potential other uses for an item before you toss it in the trash.

**13** Wait until your dishwasher is full before you run it, and allow the dishes to air dry. With most newer dishwashers, you should not need to rinse your dishes before putting them in to wash.

**14** Wait until you have a full load to do laundry. If your community allows it, hang laundry out to dry.

**15** Install a water-saving shower head, or keep showers to 5 minutes or less.

**16** Fix dripping faucets immediately.

**17** Turn the lights off when you leave the room.

**18** Use beeswax or soy candles instead of paraffin. They last longer and burn cleaner.

**19** Turn television and computers off when they are not in use.

**20** Use recycled paper and print on both sides.

**21** Print addresses directly on the envelope; avoid using address labels, as they are generally not recyclable.

**22** Buy refillable pens.

**23** Dispose of waste properly. Check packaging labels for proper disposal instructions.

**24** Carpool if you can, or consider public transportation.

**25** Keep your tires fully inflated to get better gas mileage.

**26** Keep your speed to 65 on the highway. Higher speeds cut down on gas mileage.

**27** Use rechargeable batteries wherever possible. Take used batteries to an authorized collection site for recycling.

**28** Convert a portion of your lawn to landscaping with native plants. Native plants are adapted to survive with minimal attention and they provide food and habitat for birds, butterflies and other wildlife. With less area to mow, you will also save on gas.

**29** Use a natural Christmas tree instead of an artificial one. The optimal choice is a live tree which can be planted outdoors in the Spring, but even a cut tree has re-use potential.

**30** Save holiday decorations and re-use them year after year. You can use recycled giftwrap or make your own with reusable materials

# January 17 Field Trip Produces Exciting Finds

By Kathy Kuchwara

On a cold, sunny Saturday afternoon a group of AAS members met at Lost Creek Shoe Shop in Juniata County. Leaders Chad Kaufman and Aden Troyer had already been out scouting the area to find birds of interest for our annual field trip to the area. Also part of the group were Aden's grandson, also named Aden, and Henry Petersheim, another birding enthusiast from the Amish community.

We began by scouting some nearby feeders where we found several birds that, while not unique to the area, are not usually found here in winter. These included Brown Thrasher, Chipping Sparrow and Indigo Bunting. Other birds of interest were many White-crowned Sparrows and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

We then carpoled to several places that Chad and Aden had checked out earlier. We first visited a site where we have seen Red-headed Woodpeckers in the past. We were not disappointed as we found three. Continuing on, we were treated to an immature Bald Eagle, Wilson's Snipe, Northern Pintail and Canvasback. A female Northern Harrier was spotted eating prey in an open field. She was bullied into surrendering it to a Red-tailed Hawk. We saw at least 30 red-tails and a respectable number of American Kestrels. The highlight of the trip was seeing the Barn Owl, pictured above, viewed at a private residence towards the end of the day.



Barn Owl. Photo by Chad Kaufman.

I have been on many of these trips over the past several years. They are always fun but this one was very special. Our thanks go out to Chad, Henry, and both Adens for making the day memorable.

## Great Backyard Bird Count

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of winter bird populations. Participants are asked to

count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or longer if they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). Anyone can take part in the GBBC, from beginning birders to experts, and you can participate from anywhere in the world.

The count will be held Friday, **February 13, through Monday, February 16, 2015**. Please visit the official website [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) for more information.

It's fun, free and easy. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the

Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing and how to protect them and the environment we share. In 2014, participants turned in more than 144,000 checklists, creating the world's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

On the website participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. All participants are entered in a drawing for prizes that include bird feeders, binoculars, CDs, and many other great products.

Please visit [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) for more information on how to be a part of this important citizen science project.



Carolina Wren (left) and Downy Woodpecker. Photo by Richard Price.



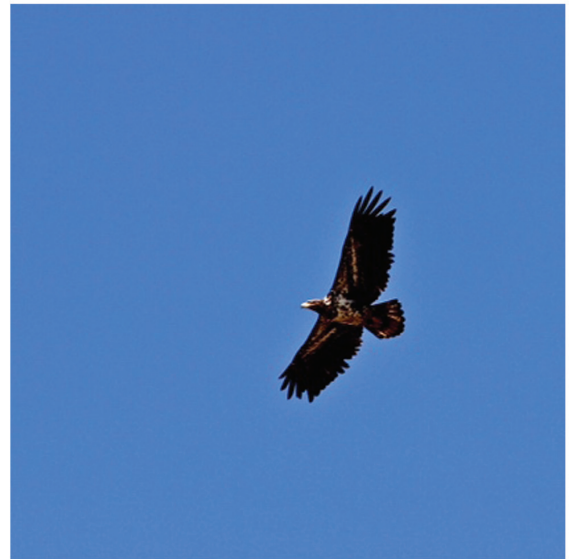
## FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP

### Saturday, February 7th, 2015 — Conowingo Dam

Got a bad case of cabin fever? Come join us on Saturday, February 7, for a trip to Conowingo Dam in northern Maryland for a brief birding break. We will meet at 10:00am behind the Cedar Cliff McDonald's, just off the I-83 New Cumberland exit. Bring a packed lunch and plenty of warm clothes as the breeze off the river can be chilling. Also, bring a spotting scope if you have one.

Fisherman's Park below the dam is a popular venue in the winter for photographers who want to photograph Bald Eagles and for serious birders who are willing to sort through hundreds of Ring-billed and Herring Gulls for the occasional uncommon Glaucous or Iceland Gull, as well as other rarities. It is also a good place to see Great Blue Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons in the winter, since there is always open water below the dam. Common Mergansers and other waterfowl may be found as well. It can be a good spot to see Black Vultures up close.

Interested participants should contact Rick Price at [rprice210@comcast.net](mailto:rprice210@comcast.net) or 717-657-1950. The trip will not be held if there is inclement weather as the road to the river is steep and winding. For additional information about winter birding at Conowingo Dam check out the Harford Bird Club website at [www.harfordbirdclub.org](http://www.harfordbirdclub.org).



Immature Bald Eagle. Photo by Richard Price.

## MARCH FIELD TRIP

### Sunday March 1, 2015 — Middle Creek

We are planning on an exciting day of Snow Geese, Tundra Swans, ducks, eagles, and hopefully Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls as they prepare for their annual migration. We will be staying through the late afternoon and into dusk to watch for the harriers and owls. Trip leader Pete Fox will meet us at Lower Dauphin High School rear parking lot at 2:00pm for carpooling. Contact Pete at [peterfoxjr@yahoo.com](mailto:peterfoxjr@yahoo.com) or 583-2639 to register.



Short-eared Owl (left) and Snow Geese (above). Photos by Richard Price.





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FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015

AAS monthly programs typically take place on the third Thursday of each month at the **Christ Presbyterian Church** located at 421 Deerfield Road, in the Allendale neighborhood of Camp Hill. Join us at 7:00pm for socializing and refreshments. The program begins at 7:30pm.

### DIRECTIONS

**I-83 southbound** — take exit 40B towards New Cumberland. Stay straight, cross Carlisle Road to Cedar Cliff Drive. Turn left onto Allendale Way and turn left onto Deerfield Road. The Church is on the left. Park in the second lot.

**I-83 northbound** — take exit 40B, turn left onto Carlisle Road/Simpson Ferry Road and go under I-83. Turn left again at the light onto Cedar Cliff Drive. Turn left onto Allendale Way and turn left onto Deerfield Road. The Church is on the left. Park in the second lot.



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**February:** Conowingo Dam

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## JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP PAGE!

Our Facebook page not only will inform and remind you of our events, it also will allow you to post your comments and photos and see what other AAS friends are up to! Please go to the following link <https://www.facebook.com/groups/515034908575016/> and click to join the group. An administrator will add you to the group promptly.



## WINTER STORM CANCELLATION OF AAS PROGRAMS

If severe weather is forecast for the evening of an AAS program, please check one of the following for possible cancellation information:

- Our Facebook Page
- WHTM ABC27 at [www.abc27.com](http://www.abc27.com)
- Or call 717-697-6696

