



# Kingfisher Courier

DECEMBER 2015 | JANUARY 2016

APPALACHIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

AAS PROGRAM | DECEMBER 2015

## The Biggest Week in American Birding – Ian Gardner

In spring, birds and birders accumulate along the shore of Lake Erie in northwestern Ohio. Migrating birds pause before crossing the lake and birders come for the opportunity to see the avian kaleidoscope of warbler migration.

This past May, Appalachian Audubon member Ian Gardner volunteered as a birding guide for “The Biggest Week in American Birding.” The 10-day annual festival, hosted by Black Swamp Bird Observatory during peak songbird migration, is one of the premier events in birding. It features field trips, workshops, and speakers.

At the December meeting, Ian, who has a degree in Wildlife Conservation from Juniata College and is currently finishing his Master’s Thesis in Forest Resources, will share his experiences as a guide during the Biggest Week. In addition, he will review some of the features of eBird, a tool used by many birders to record sightings, which provides valuable information to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Please join Appalachian Audubon on Thursday, December 10, the **second week of the month**. The social gathering starts at 7:00 PM, followed by the monthly meeting at 7:30. Ian’s program will conclude the evening.



Photo courtesy Rick Price

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**  
Thursday, December 10 @ 7:00pm

AAS PROGRAM | JANUARY 2016

## Raptor Migration – Dr. Keith Bildstein

Keith Bildstein is Director of Conservation Science at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, where he has been on staff since 1992. Throughout the scientific community, he is well known for his raptor migration studies on four continents. Currently he is researching New World Vultures in North and South America and Hooded Vultures in Africa.

Dr. Bildstein’s comprehensive knowledge of bird migration includes the history, ecology, geography, science, and conservation of over 200 species, as well as an understanding of how the birds’ bodies handle the demands of long-distance migration and how they navigate.

His book, *Migrating Raptors of the World: Their Ecology and Conservation*, and his work with Turkey Vultures will be the basis for his talk. In addition to raptor accounts, the book chronicles stories and successes of twelve of the world’s most important raptor-viewing spots, among them:

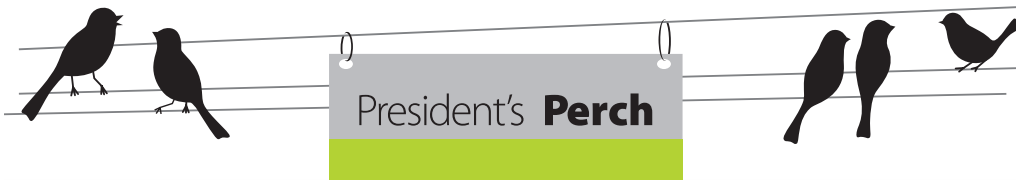
- Cape May Point, New Jersey;
- Veracruz, Mexico;
- Kekoldi, Costa Rica;
- Strait of Gibraltar, Spain; and
- Elat, Israel.

The program will be on Thursday, January 21, following the social gathering at 7:00 PM and the monthly meeting at 7:30 PM.



Photo courtesy Keith Bildstein/  
Hawk Mountain

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Thursday, January 21 @ 7:00pm



Before I started birding I really didn't care for winter. I thought it was long, cold and dreary. I began to get depressed on Labor Day and was unhappy until the end of March. When I joined AAS I began to brave the elements and participate in winter field trips. I went to the Conewengo Dam to see eagles and Middle Creek for the Snow Geese. After a few years I became part of the Christmas Bird Counts and worked up to two to three counts a season. (I'm now doing four.)

The winter of 2008-2009 was when things changed. There was an irruption of crossbills in our area. I had never seen one and Annette Mathes offered to take me to a cemetery in Shippensburg where a flock had been found. We went on a freezing Saturday morning and I got to add another species to my list. But more importantly I began to appreciate the uniqueness of birding in the winter.

I got to see birds that aren't around during the warmer months. I also began to appreciate the stark beauty of birding on an overcast winter day. There is something hauntingly beautiful about a Northern Harrier soaring over an open field just as dusk begins to fall. The challenge of searching through a flock of Horned Larks hoping to find Snow Buntings or Lapland Longspurs is another winter exclusive. Even the birds at my feeders are different. I was happy this week to see that the Dark-eyed Juncos had returned.

So my hope is that you all will try to get out and bird this winter. Go on one of our field trips and join a Christmas Bird Count. Or just bundle up, go outside and look for birds. If you're not able to do that check out your feeders and yards. Operation Feeder Watch and the Great Backyard Bird Count are great opportunities to bird your immediate area and provide important information about bird populations and movement to researchers.

Happy Birding!!!

**There is something hauntingly beautiful about a Northern Harrier soaring over an open field just as dusk begins to fall.**

— Kathy Kuchwara

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**Trout Run**  
Vacant



## Field Trips

### JANUARY FIELD TRIP

**Saturday, January 16, 2016**  
**Juniata County Winter Birding**

Bundle up and join Aden Troyer and Chad Kauffman while we search for Short-eared Owls, Lapland Longspurs, Pine Siskins and other winter birds. Red-headed Woodpeckers and Northern Harriers are often seen during the afternoon. Contact Aden at 463-3117 or Chad at chadkauffman@earthlink.net, 436-8257 or 994-6715. We will meet at Lost Creek Shoe Shop at 12:30 PM. (We usually bird until dusk in hopes of spotting the owls.) Carpooling is required from the meeting place and participation is limited to the first 20 people who respond.

# Christmas BIRD COUNTS by Rick Price

'Tis the season for experienced and novice birders alike to think about participating in one or more local Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs.) This tradition dates back to 1900 and affords thousands of bird watchers excellent opportunities to become "citizen scientists" by joining a local group in a 15 mile diameter circle in the greater Harrisburg area. National Audubon reported that over 70,000 counters participated in over 2,300 local count circles in a recent year. CBCs provide an excellent chance to observe resident and winter birds and to enjoy camaraderie with other people with similar interests.

If you are up for a unique winter



adventure in our region, please contact one of the coordinators listed below for more information. Don your warm apparel, grab your bins and a snack and get ready to count! We hope to see you out there.

## **Harrisburg CBC**

Saturday, December 19, 2015  
Contact Deuane Hoffman at 564-7475 or [corvuscorax@comcast.net](mailto:corvuscorax@comcast.net)

## **New Bloomfield CBC**

Sunday, December 27, 2015  
Contact Annette Mathes at 514-4512 or [amathes19@verizon.net](mailto:amathes19@verizon.net)

## **York Springs CBC**

Tuesday, December 29, 2015  
(Cumberland, Adams, & York)  
Contact Vern Gauthier at 385-9526 or [pabirder@gmail.com](mailto:pabirder@gmail.com)

## **Newville CBC**

Saturday, January 2, 2016  
Contact Vern Gauthier at 385-9526 or [pabirder@gmail.com](mailto:pabirder@gmail.com)

## It Takes A Chapter ...

*by Kathy Kuchwara*

Our birdseed sale was a success because of a group of dedicated individuals who came together to make it happen. As always there were last minute snags, a shortage of tables, family emergencies and an iffy weather forecast, which all seemed to converge to threaten us. But it all worked out.

When I arrived Friday morning Paul Zeph had the traffic cones in place and was setting up the tables he had brought for the event.

This was Sue Hannon's first year as volunteer coordinator and she handled it well. (Her son and mother even came to help out). We had plenty of volunteers to assist with the organization of the site. Thanks to the coordination of Jon Dale, Gary Labelle, Sue Strassner, Kay Cribbs, and Annette Mathes, we were able to get our seed and birdfeeders set up quickly. We even had a few minutes to "catch our breath" before the sale began. And the tables came through--in fact we had extra, thanks to Ann DePaulis, Paul Zeph, Sue Hannon, Sue Strassner, Jon Dale, and the Audubon State Office at Wildwood. Annette Mathes and Andy Groff came out of retirement from being treasurer to handle the financial aspect of the sale.

Throughout the two days there was a host of volunteers who gave of their time (which, let's face it, we never have enough of anymore) to keep things running smoothly. I cannot begin



to thank them enough and to simply mention their names seems small recognition for their efforts: Jon Dale, Gary LaBelle, Annette Mathes, Aaron Helwig, Susan Miller, Sue Strassner, Lorrie Preston, Floyd Sollenberger, Hank and Michelle Osborne, Paul Zeph, Kay Cribbs, Jane and Will Webster, Dominic Mirachi, William (Dominic's friend), Dan Dupert, Ann DePaulis, Eli DePaulis, Rick and Peggy Price, Chris and Karen Atwood, Mary Rose Noto-Hardy, Judy Bowman, Deb Latsha, Jane Barnette, Harv Baney, and Mary Ann Ingram.

And a very special thanks to Susan Miller who helped coordinate pre-sale arrangements.

Several businesses also helped us: Boscov's again donated the use of their former garden center, Equipment Depot donated the use of the forklift, Davis Country Living supplied the seed, feeders, and accessories for us to sell, Wood and Myers Oral Surgery allowed us to post our birdseed sale sign in front of their office, and Issac's provided sandwiches, chips and cookies for our volunteers.

For those of you who were not able to help us because of prior commitments, please consider getting involved in our chapter. We have a lot of fun and the fellowship is great. And whatever you can contribute is appreciated. Contact me at [kathykatbird2@comcast.net](mailto:kathykatbird2@comcast.net) for more information.





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Except for the May Banquet, 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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## AAS members on the move



## AAS Seeks Finance Committee Volunteers

Our chapter is seeking volunteers to be part of a committee to help assist in the administration of our chapter's finances. If you have a background in accounting or bookkeeping and would like to be considered for service on this committee, please contact Kathy Kuchwara at [kathykatbird2@comcast.net](mailto:kathykatbird2@comcast.net).

## 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 717-319-0828.