



Kingfisher Courier

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

APPALACHIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

AAS PROGRAM | January 2017

Patricia Barber: Pennsylvania's Endangered Grassland Birds

Patti is the PA Game Commission's Wildlife Biologist responsible for threatened and endangered birds. The endangered grassland birds of Pennsylvania will be her topic this evening, with a focus on natural history, ecological needs, and conservation outlook. In addition, she will touch on ways you can help these birds and their habitat.

Patti is an avid birder who has extensive field experience with birds. She has worked on three continents with a wide variety of birds, including Red-faced Warblers, Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, and Florida Scrub-Jays.

Refreshments and social time start at 7pm. The chapter meeting will be at 7:30pm, followed by the program.



Photo courtesy
Will Webster

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

AAS PROGRAM | February 2017

Bob Hench: Confessions of a Bad Birder

Bob is going to recount for us his failed attempt to become a birder and how that led him to his true passion, taking pictures of birds and other wildlife. He will be sharing some of his favorite photos with us as he tells the story of what brought him, an admittedly bad birder, to be speaking to our group tonight.

Join us at 7pm for refreshments and social time. A brief meeting starts at 7:30pm, followed by Bob's program.



Photo courtesy
Bob Hench

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
Thursday, February 16 @ 7:00pm

JANUARY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, January 14, 2017 Winter Birding in Juniata County

The annual winter field trip to Juniata County is an Appalachian Audubon favorite. Bird with locals Aden Troyer and Chad Kauffman in search of Short-eared Owls, Lapland Longspurs, Pine Siskins, and other winter specialties. The group will meet at the Lost Creek Shoe Shop at 12:30pm, where you can browse their extensive selection of birding optics, with hands-on testing and expert advice from the owners. Participation is limited to the first 20 to register. Carpooling is required from the meeting place. Contact Aden at 463-3117 or Chad at chadkauffman@earthlink.net, 436-8257, or 994-6715.

FEBRUARY FIELD TRIP

Saturday, February 18, 2017 —10:00am to 4:00pm Great Backyard Bird Count at Wildwood Park

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual citizen science program of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology that provides a snapshot of bird populations during President's Day weekend. This year, Appalachian Audubon and Wildwood Park will partner to get more people involved. Adults and young people ages 6–16 are encouraged to help record data at the park's nature center. Experienced volunteers will be on site to assist new birders. Binoculars will be available for those who need to borrow a pair.

There will be two breakout sessions during the day: at 1pm, a park naturalist will lead a hands-on class on bird adaptations using preserved wings and skulls; at 2pm, fun simulation games will be used to demonstrate aspects of bird behavior.

Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Call the nature center at 221-0292 with questions or to register. To learn more about the Great Backyard Bird Count, go to birdcount.org.



Photo courtesy
Rick Price



Photo courtesy
Will Webster

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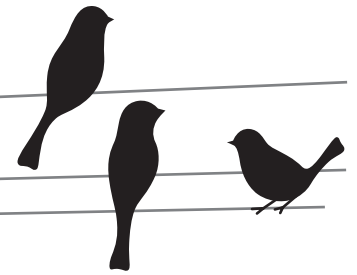
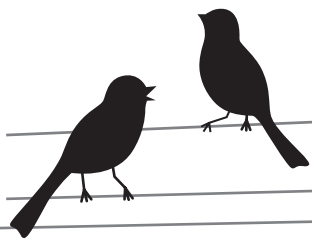
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President's Perch

It seems that Winter is finally here. Snow squalls, freezing temperatures, and icy winds are slowly making their way to the Harrisburg area and the birds are feeling it. Feeders are emptying more quickly and our feathered friends are seeking shelter more often.

Our birds are increasingly threatened and they need us now. What each of us does is an individual decision, but please do something. If the feeders are filled when food is scarce and clean, fresh water is available all year 'round, it helps improve our birds' chances of survival.

There are other important things that can be done as well. Set aside a section of your yard, patio, or field for native plants needed by birds, butterflies, and bees. (Plan on attending the Tallamy/Darke Program on April 27th to learn more about the importance of natives and the best plants

for your specific area.) Our chapter is planning another native plant sale in the spring and this will give you an opportunity to make a purchase that will help both AAS and wildlife.

For those of you who want to do more, there are many opportunities available: attend a township meeting and request that a portion of a local park be set aside for native plants and wildlife; go to the National Audubon website and learn about how you can support legislation to protect birds and other wildlife; contact your local legislators and express your concerns about environmental issues. You have many opportunities to make a difference for our birds.

Thank you,
Kathy Kuchwara

Birdseed Sale Volunteers

by Kathy Kuchwara

Once again so many dedicated individuals came together to make our annual birdseed sale a success. The weather cooperated with sunny skies and comfortable temperatures on October 14 and 15. Even the resident Red-tailed Hawk provided entertainment on Saturday morning.

Many people gave of their time. Some actually gave up a whole weekend to make sure vehicles got safely through the waiting zone, the right customer got the right seed, the seed was loaded quickly as vehicles passed through the distribution area, customers got important information on feeders and related supplies, and money was collected properly. All volunteers had jobs and they did them so well.

Here is a list of those volunteers who helped out that weekend: Kay Cribbs, Sue Strassner, Will Webster, Annette Mathes, Mary Brenner, Jane Webster, Karen Atwood, Paul Zeph, Jon Latsha,

Deb Latsha, Susan Miller, Jon Dale, Gary LaBelle, Randi Denton, Judy Bowman, Rick Price, Peggy Price, Jane Barnett, Tracey Ash, Andy Groff, Kevin Shannon, Ron Barrett, Chris Atwood, Bob Glasscock, Lorrie Preston, Dominic Mirarchi and Christina Marcellus.

I would also like to thank the following businesses who provided assistance: Boscov's of Camp Hill gave us the use of their property; Equipment Depot provided the forklift; Isaac's Restaurant provided sandwiches and related food items for our volunteers.

Also, I'd like to thank Tim Lehman of Davis County Living/Agway in Mechanicsburg who partnered with us in the sale of seed, feeders and related items. Deb Latsha donated uniquely decorated gourd birdhouses for us to sell.

I cannot express how grateful I am to everyone who helped out. We netted \$2,378.39 from our sale.



Photos courtesy Susan Miller

My Experience at Goddard Leadership Legacy Institute 2016

by Mia Mattingly

This year, I was accepted to attend the Goddard Leadership Legacy Institute run by the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy. I was also selected to receive a scholarship from the Appalachian Audubon Society. At the institute, I learned all about the environment while also learning about leadership skills. I had an amazing time and I am very thankful for this experience. Here are some of the highlights from the six-day Institute.



Photo courtesy Goddard Leadership Legacy Institute

On the first day, we had a tour of the Ironmaster's Mansion at Pine Grove Furnace, where we would be staying for part of the week. It was built in 1829, making it 187 years old! The building was unique and cool to stay in.

To help build our leadership skills, we headed to Diakon Wilderness Center, where we completed various rope courses and team activities. It was very challenging, but since we worked together, we were able to do it.

We went to the LeTort Spring Run preserve, an old watercress farm overrun with invasive species and poor water conditions. We tested the water and looked for healthy species in the creek. While the water quality was better than it was last year, it was still unhealthy. This is especially bad because this creek is part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. So to help the environment by the LeTort, we got rid of an invasive species named Japanese Stiltgrass. We tore it up and replaced it with different native species. This will improve the health of the environment, including

the creek. When we finished, we headed back to the mansion and went to Fuller Lake to swim and play volleyball. We also went to Laurel Lake to swim and kayak.

The next morning, we went to a dairy farm and learned how the farm kept water run-off from going into the local creek, the Conodoguinet. We were able to see the cows and the milking system. From here we went to the Conservation District center and learned more about run-off and how we can help at our own homes. When we finished there, we ventured to the Merrill Environmental Center located in Annapolis, Maryland, where we got a tour of the building and set up camp at the beach.

After we woke up on the beach, we headed to the Chesapeake Bay Oyster

Restoration Center, where we helped clean old oyster shells that will be the new home of baby oysters. On a tour of the center, we saw the process the oysters go through before they are put into the bay. When we finished, we went back to the beach and explored the bay. Since it was our last night, we had seafood and watched a movie in the Merrill Center.

On the last day, we wrapped up and went to downtown Annapolis, then back to the mansion and said our goodbyes to everyone.

I had an incredible time at the Goddard Leadership Legacy Institute and I loved every minute of it. Thank you to the members of the Appalachian Audubon Society for giving me the opportunity to attend this amazing experience.

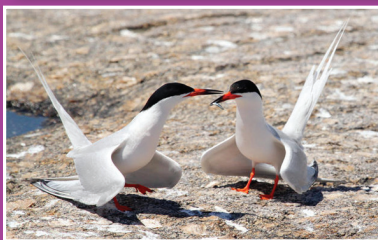
2017 Scholarship Opportunities

Appalachian Audubon has two scholarships available for camps at Audubon's Hog Island in Maine. The deadline for applications is January 28, 2017.

Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens • June 18–23, 2017

Marine Natural History for Teens • July 9–14, 2017

Information at <http://www.appalachianaudubon.org/education.htm>



Photos above courtesy Hog Island



Photo courtesy Scott Weidensaul

Cooperative Avian Conservation and Outreach (CACAO) in Honduras

by Ian Gardner

CACAO is the Honduran colloquial name for the threatened Red-throated Caracara, a species of raptor that has nearly disappeared from Central America in the past few decades. It is also the acronym for a small but passionate cooperative of American, Belgian, Dutch, Canadian, and Honduran conservationists. We plan to spend 20 days this January in Honduras leading a research expedition to the remote eastern portion of the country. We will work with local conservation pioneers and preserves to survey and promote the wide diversity of bird life in this very special region. We would love to have your support to meet our goals, so that we can collaborate with local conservationists in the most productive way possible.

In Honduras, a keystone country in the Mesoamerican Biological Hotspot, preserves and the environment have benefited very little from large conservation initiatives. Honduras' 750+ bird species and the thousands of other species of flora and fauna have been scantily provided for by the millions upon millions of dollars spent in large, often misguided conservation efforts over the past few decades. Alternatively, the modest funds generated from birding activities, if invested directly into local economies, can better help birds by stimulating communities and individuals towards protecting birds and their habitats.

Birders provide the critical service of helping document bird species that are threatened by damaging activities such as mining and energy development, which frequently proceed with poor or absent biological data. Communities that try to stop these activities and protect the environment are pushed out of the way and even destroyed, with environmental activists at constant risk of life and limb. Birders can help by not only donating portions of tour proceeds to local bird conservation initiatives, but also by carrying out rapid assessments of avian populations in the many areas with little or no existing documentation.

CACAO will conduct rapid avian assessments and community outreach to two regions of eastern Honduras, Rus Rus Biological Reserve and Botaderos National Park, that have been little



Photos courtesy Ian Gardner

studied. These two areas are in eastern Honduras, where at least 60 species of neotropical birds reach their northern boundaries. Additionally, 102 species of neotropical migrants utilize the forests and scrub habitat in this area. Several resident species, including Eastern Bluebird, American Kestrel, Vermilion Flycatcher, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Botteri's Sparrow, Grassland Yellow-Finch, and Hepatic Tanager, have isolated populations or subspecies in these areas. At least 10 other species are proposed hypothetically for this area and

represent new species registered in the country. Documentation of birds in this region of Honduras through standard measurements and photographs will provide valuable information that could reveal new populations, morphs, subspecies or even new species for science.

In December, the AAS board received an overview of this project and voted to donate \$500 to support it. Please check out www.gofundme.com/CACAO for more information and to donate to our cause.

Coffee Sales Support Conservation in Honduras

Appalachian Audubon is selling organic shade-grown coffee from Honduras that is freshly roasted in Gettysburg. It is available at program meetings for \$10 per pound for ground or whole bean.

The coffee is grown on family-owned and operated farms that actively support neotropical migrants. Purchases promote conservation in Honduras.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

Except for the December program and 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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For the April program, Appalachian Audubon is partnering with Manada Conservancy to bring Dr. Douglas Tallamy and Richard Darke, two of the leading authorities on the interplay of design, native plants, and wildlife, to Lower Dauphin High School. In the program, *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity*, the speakers will explore how layers of native plants evolved with local wildlife. Their presentation will enhance our ability to see these layers and create them in a landscape.

Please note that this program will be the 4th Thursday in April rather than Audubon's regular 3rd Thursday.

**WINTER STORM
CANCELLATION OF
AAS PROGRAMS**

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

- www.Facebook.com/appalachianaudubon
- WHTM abc27 at www.abc27.com
- 717-319-0828

**AAS MEMBERS
ON THE MOVE**