

July, 1991

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK....

Since this "Annual Meeting" newsletter will be sent to many potential members, I would like to discuss the PSO--past, present, and future.

The Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Project combined the efforts of professional and amateur ornithologists throughout our state with tremendous success. Birders had the opportunity to meet other birders from across the state. As the project neared completion, regional coordinators discussed the merits of keeping this ornithological network together. Thus the PSO was organized to promote the study, appreciation, and conservation of birds. We intend to be an active society, organizing projects, conducting field trips, and having annual meetings plus a newsletter.

We held our first annual meeting last fall and produced four newsletters. Our first project, the Special Areas Project, to inventory birds found on public lands throughout the state, is well underway. Field trips have been conducted; data has been collected and submitted to our SAP chairperson. Helpful bird lists will be provided for state parks, and valuable information will be made available to resource managers.

An outstanding second annual meeting has been planned by Shonah Hunter. This will provide an opportunity to meet new and old friends during a weekend filled with both education and fun at a modest cost. We need your assistance on the SAP and with future projects. If you are not a member, please complete the application on the back of the registration form. If you are already a member, please talk to your friends about joining.

Most other states have active ornithological organizations; the need has existed in Pennsylvania for many years. Let's work together to promote ornithology! We hope you will participate in both the Special Areas Project and our second annual meeting.

See you in September!

--Conrad Schmidt, President

1991 ANNUAL PSO MEETING

The foundation has been constructed for an outstanding weekend of education, companionship, fun, and birding at Crystal Lake Camps on September 13, 14, and 15.

Crystal Lake is located in North-central Pennsylvania, north of Route 220, at Tivoli, which is about four miles north of Hughesville. It is easy to find; just follow the signs from Route 220 to the end of the road.

Two lakes, Crystal and Wild Rice Lakes, are located on the 920-acre property. The varied habitats, including northern hardwood forest, hemlock stands, wetlands, and cranberry and blueberry bogs, provide species diversity. During the summer and winter months, the camps are heavily used by campers and cross-country skiers. All the recreational facilities will be available for our use FREE of charge. Activities include boating, swimming, tennis, basketball, and hiking. There are many miles of marked trails used by cross-country skiers as well as nearby Loyalsock Trail. You and your family can enjoy these activities in your free time, or you may just relax in the beautiful mountain environment.

Saturday afternoon speakers will provide information on a variety of

topics of interest to birders. These include:

Tim Kimmel--Goshawk Research on the Allegheny National Forest and Bald Eagle State Forest

Judy Wink--Great Horned Owls

Ed Kwater--Identification of Holarctic Gulls

Dan Brauning--Status of Ornithological Activities by the Game Commission

You will have opportunities to attend field trips conducted by local birders and assist with a SAP trip to World's End State Park.

Note the low cost of your visit to this mountain retreat. Cost is only \$58 per person for the weekend (two nights' lodging and five meals). Or only \$29 for one night's lodging and three meals. Bring a friend.

Please note that alcoholic beverages are not permitted at Crystal Lake Camps. Also, smoking is not permitted in the buildings.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Shonah A. Hunter
Department of Biological Sciences
Lock Haven University
Lock Haven, PA 17745

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE MEETING!

ANNUAL MEETING--1991

Friday, September 13, 1991

EVENING

Check-in

Dinner

Videos (Provided by Game Commission, etc.)

Saturday, September 14

MORNING

Special Areas Project--World's End State Park

Birding--Crystal Lake Camps

AFTERNOON

Tim Kimmel--Goshawk Research

Judy Wink--Great Horned Owls

Ed Kwater--Gull Identification

Doug Gross--SAP

Dan Brauning--Game Commission's Ornithological Activities

EVENING

Business Meeting

Election of Officers

Sunday, September 15

MORNING

Birding on the way home. Options include:

Montour Preserve
Rose Valley Lake
Rickett's Glen State Park

ANNUAL MEETING ACTIVITIES

Many recreational facilities are available for our use, free of charge, at Crystal Lake Camps. These include boating (boats, canoes, sailboats, or kayaks), swimming, tennis, basketball, baseball, and hiking. The Loyalsock Trail is nearby.

WHEN

Friday, September 13 through Sunday, September 15

WHERE

Crystal Lake Camps on the Lycoming/

Sullivan County line, north of Hughesville. Follow the signs from Route 220 near Tivoli.

RULES FOR USING THE CAMP FACILITIES

No alcoholic beverages

Smoking is not permitted in the buildings

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Recently I have received numerous inquiries concerning membership renewal in PSO. This is quite understandable since I have mailed out only a few renewal notices. For those wondering when to renew, I'll try to explain our policy.

Your renewal date is based upon the date you first joined PSO. For example, if you joined in February, 1990, your membership technically expired in February, 1991. (I used the word "technically" because it isn't fair to drop a member for non-renewal if he or she hasn't received a renewal notice.) An exception is made for those who joined PSO in 1989; their anniversary date is January, 1990.

Your membership expiration date now appears on your address label. If it is earlier than August, 1991, this will be your last newsletter. If you have renewed prior to June 15 yet your renewal is not shown on the address label, please contact me immediately at the address indicated below, so that I may check my records.

I will be mailing renewal notices about one month before your expiration date. We would appreciate your renewing ahead of time. (It will save postage for PSO and time for me.)

Our current membership stands at 150 individuals and couples scattered across the state. Please renew today, using the membership form on the back of the meeting registration form. Thanks for your cooperation!

--Eugene Zielinski, R.R. 3, Box 71, Bellefonte, PA 16823



THE RAVEN REPORTER

News of the Special Areas Project

The Special Areas Project is off and running.

Just last week, a forklift entered my office with a special first-class delivery of a huge brown paper package. What was inside this monstrous envelope? Special Areas Project data from the Todd Bird Club. It seems as if Margaret Higbee and her flock of intrepid birders spend most of their waking hours at Yellow Creek State Park. They have counted lots of water birds, including loons, grebes, swans, geese, ducks, gulls, terns, and shorebirds at this lakeside park. Yes, they even found a few Willets and Forster's Terns. There are enough forests and fields here to allow a number of songbirds, too. By the end of the year, the species list for this Special Area will be very long! The Todd Bird Club is certainly proving the point that Yellow Creek State Park is a great place to see birds. Old Clyde Todd would be proud of his namesake organization.

Thus far, we have received data on six Special Areas Projects: State Game Lands 13, Susquehanna State Park, Tiadaghton State Forest, World's End State Park, Wyoming State Forest, and Yellow Creek State Park. All of these data are valuable. For instance, Wes Egli of the Lycoming Audubon Society is canvassing Susquehanna State Park. Since it is a small area, he is doing it pretty much by himself. Wes has gotten off to a good start in just one of the many tracts of land in Lycoming County (Pennsylvania's largest) for which there is little or no documentation of birds. He may not get a long list of birds at this little park, but it will be important to those who visit it and want a useful and accurate checklist.

In Sullivan County, the North Branch

Bird Club is inventorying World's End State Park. We were delighted to hear a nestful of young ravens on a cliff in the park (How appropriate!), but also quite surprised to observe a flock of Fish Crows flying over. This was the first documentation of Fish Crows in Sullivan County, which is not exactly a lowland riparian area where one would expect this corvid.

You never know what you will find if you look hard enough. In one of the Special Areas that I am inventorying, I located a nest of a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. This may be the first Yellow-bellied Flycatcher nest found in this state in more than seventy years. Watch for an article in Pennsylvania Birds about this important discovery.

Speaking of Pennsylvania Birds, the editors of our state's bird journal are also getting involved in the Special Areas Project. Barb and Frank Haas have started to work on their neighboring game lands, SGL 52. If the Haases can find time to work on this project, so can anyone else.

Several Audubon chapters and bird clubs have become sponsors of the Special Areas Project, and other groups have inquired about it. We have projects started in several counties including Indiana, Lancaster, Lebanon, Luzerne, Lycoming, Sullivan, York, Huntingdon, Cambria, and Cumberland--just to name a few. Many have commented that this project is a logical step after the Atlas Project. We think so, too. Most of the clubs in South-central Pennsylvania have gotten started through the leadership of PSO board member Jane Earle. Thanks to Jane and all our new participants. And a hearty "good birding" to all our Special Areas Project cooperators.

How to Become Involved with the Special Areas Project

Special Areas Projects are being sponsored by local clubs or chapters of larger organizations, usually a bird club or Audubon Society. Each Special Area needs a Local Coordinator. This

person must be a good organizer and communicator, as well as a good birder. We anticipate that many former Breeding Bird Atlas Project Regional Coordinators will fulfill this role. If you are interested in being the Local Coordinator for a Special Areas Project, please contact Douglas Gross, Chairman of the SAP Committee. His address appears below. Other members of this committee are Bob Martin, Margaret Brittingham, Margaret Higbee, and Daniel Brauning. We are asking for \$25 from each sponsoring organization in order to fund expenses we expect to incur during the project. Please approach your group for these funds and send all proceeds to Bob Martin.

For information, contact:

Douglas A. Gross	Bob Martin
c/o Ecology III	128 Elmwood Court
R.R. 1	Emporium, PA 15834
Berwick, PA 18603	

YELLOW CREEK SAP REPORT

--by Margaret Higbee

PSO's Special Areas Project (SAP) is well underway at Yellow Creek State Park.

Gloria Lamer, Becky Byerly, and I bird Yellow Creek almost every Tuesday morning. We are often joined by other members of the Todd Bird Club. So far 22 people have participated in one of our SAP outings. A total of 73 trips have been conducted at Yellow Creek since November.

Anyone who liked atlasing will love the SAP. It is such an exhilarating feeling to return again and again to the same area. During the Atlas Project, birding was at times frustrating because there were too many blocks to cover in too little time. With SAP, each Special Area can receive the attention it deserves. We can spend the extra minutes and attempt to confirm a variety of species. The anticipation of being able to see a Pine Warbler, for example, with its bill stuffed with tasty morsels for its young is overwhelming. Just to be able to code that bird "CF"--or

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

Annual Meeting
 September 13-15, 1991
 Crystal Lake Camps, Hughesville, PA 17737

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 19, 1991

Name _____ Sex _____
 _____ Sex _____

Mailing Address _____

REGISTRATION FEE: (Before August 19, 1991. Nonrefundable after August 31, 1991)

		No. of Persons	Total
Members	\$10.00	<u>2</u>	<u>20.00</u>
Non-members	\$20.00	_____	_____
Children	FREE REGISTRATION	_____	_____
Spouse	FREE REGISTRATION	_____	_____
Late Registration--Add	\$5.00	_____	_____

ACCOMMODATIONS (including the indicated meals):

2 nights (Fri./Sat.) \$58.00 2 116.00

Meals: Fri. supper (until 9 p.m.) through Sun. breakfast

1 night (Sat.) \$34.00 _____

Meals: Sat. lunch through Sun. breakfast

1 night (Fri.) \$29.00 _____

Meals: Fri. supper through Sat. lunch

TOTAL _____

Bed linen is provided. Bring your own bathroom linen. *+ pillows*

Roommate preference (if any): _____

Please pay a \$25 deposit on accommodations by August 19, 1991.
 Written cancellations must be received by September 7, 1991 for accommodation refund.

Make checks payable to "Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology" and mail to:

Dr. Shonah A. Hunter
 Dept. of Biological Sciences
 Lock Haven University
 Lock Haven, PA 17745

Announcing the

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

At the last Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas Project coordinators' meeting, it was resolved to form a state-wide ornithological society to carry on the work. A group of volunteers has been laboring to get things off the ground, and so...the PSO. Our goals are knowledge, understanding, appreciation, and conservation. We intend to be an active society, organizing projects, conducting field trips, and having annual meetings plus a newsletter. Several potential projects have been suggested, including bird-use surveys of public lands, night bird surveys, publication of out-of-print works on Pennsylvania ornithology, and a state bird-finding guide. We would like your suggestions and your membership help!

To join, send your ideas, along with \$10 dues, and this form to:

Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology
c/o Eugene Zielinski
R.R. 3, Box 71
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Spread the word!

--Conrad R. Schmidt, President

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Telephone _____

Amount Enclosed _____

You may also use this form for membership renewals. Please check the line below if this is a renewal.

Renewal _____

better yet, "FY"! But, alas, the bird has disappeared in the canopy. Instead again we have focused in on a Red-eyed Vireo and confirmed nesting Red-eyed Vireo for the zillionth time! Such are the joys and frustrations of the SAP.

But SAP trips can be very rewarding. Returning repeatedly to the same area enables the observer to intimately know the Special Area. Prior to SAP, we birded Yellow Creek. We stopped at the park office, the boat launch, and the beach. Maybe we'd hike the short trail to the waterfowl observatory, but we didn't really "know" Yellow Creek State Park. We have found so many "new" birding hotspots. We've hiked the five-mile round trip to the dam; we've checked out that interesting spruce grove; and we've found those pines where owls have obviously roosted during the winter months. And yet, we still have not covered the entire park. There are still more interesting areas to explore even though Yellow Creek is not an extremely large park.

Life sometimes seems like a dull routine. Participating in SAP can change that. We have had many interesting experiences during a SAP trip.

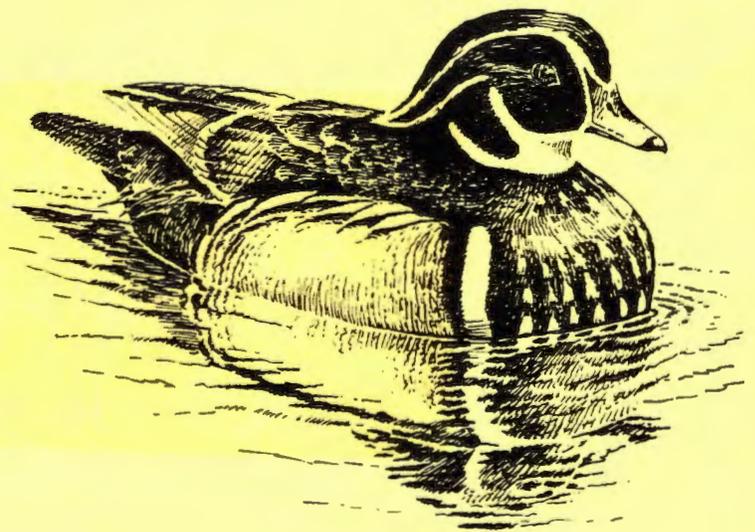
One of our March trips to Yellow Creek occurred after the spring thaw. Shortly after a young woman joined our group and all the introductions were made, her car became stuck in the mud at the boat launch, our first stop. Helpful Gloria Lamer, along with several other TBC'ers jumped from their cars to help push the stuck vehicle. Unfortunately, the mud was slick, and as the car lunged backward from the mud, Gloria lunged face forward into the mud. Interestingly enough, the young woman promptly abandoned ship at our second stop when she realized we were not "her group." The result of this episode was even photographed!

In late April, Gloria Lamer accompanied by her mother Frances Michny, decided to do a brief SAP trip. As Gloria drove along heading for the beach, her mother asked "What about this

white bird?" Standing no more than two feet from the road was the first county record of Cattle Egret.

One disadvantage at Yellow Creek is the large number of fishermen who use the lake. Motor boats are abundant and frequently flush the waterfowl. But occasionally one of those fishermen will give our group a hearty chuckle. Such was the case in mid-May when three of us, Gloria Lamer, Georgette Syster, and I, were scoping the lake from the area locally known as LEO's. The men in the boat were attempting to talk above the roar of their motor. What they did not realize was that their conversation was very clear to us. We had just packed it in; all the waterfowl on the lake had been counted and recorded. We were beginning our walk up the hill away from the lake. One of the fishermen remarked, "One of them's a girl." Georgette immediately turned around and questioned, "Which one?" Of course, they couldn't hear us.

So if you find life to be a tad boring at times, participate in SAP. You never know what birds you'll see, what people you'll meet, or which secluded spot you'll find. And, you might even find a rarity!



JOHN SIDELINGER

