

PSO Newsletter



The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

March 1997

Volume 8, Number 1

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK....

I write this message as I await my plane in Williamsport en route to San Antonio, Texas, to participate in a meeting of the National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA) program of the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The USGS is now a fairly large agency (about 10,000 employees) within the Interior Department since it recently acquired the National Biological Service (1,750 employees) as its 4th division, the Biological Resources Division. Even prior to this merger, however, the USGS employed an impressive number of biologists and ecologists working on the health of our nation's groundwater, rivers, and streams. The merger should strengthen our efforts to assess and understand issues such as land use impacts on streams, falling water tables, contaminants in watersheds/food chains, and other industrialization/urbanization effects. The USGS has facilities in every state and territory as well as several in Pennsylvania, including Williamsport, Harrisburg (Lemoyne), and Pittsburgh. The Lemoyne water resources group alone boasts over 100 employees. By contrast, we are struggling to hold onto 19 people at the Research and Development Lab (Biological Resources Division) in Wellsboro. One major difference between "them and us" is their reluctance to interpret their data in the context of environmental degradation. Our agency has never had that problem, especially in view of our historical association with (and origin in) the Fish and Wildlife Service. There are currently NAWQA study units (watershed study sites) on the Lower Susquehanna Basin, the Allegheny and Monongahela River, and, starting in 1997, the entire Delaware River watershed. That leaves very little of our state left out of intense

scrutiny for study of the many problems underlying our water-related resources. Take an interest in this program and demand to know what the studies are showing.

At our recent meeting of the board of directors in State College on February 22, we learned that renewal of both the Water Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act has been postponed again in favor of the Superfund program. Both of these acts are important to birds as well as to the overall ecosystem health. Let's use every opportunity we have to remind our elected officials that strong renewals are important to us. Another example of "progress" running rampant discussed at the board meeting is the proposed construction of two more lanes for Route 220 between Tyrone and State College, to accommodate heavy football traffic in the fall. We hear that the National Audubon Society dropped their opposition to the ridge routing in exchange for funding of favored bird programs. The PSO will go on record, however, as "favoring" a valley expansion to avoid heavy impact on forest interior bird habitat on the high ridge.

Now some reflections on birding in Texas, from which I have just returned (2 weeks after writing the above). I added 16 species to my life list after birding for a few days in the Lost Maples area, Pecos River, and Big Bend National Park. And that's before the big migration! I'm convinced the foremost way to communicate in Texas is with a fence. Fences (big sturdy ones!) dominate the entire landscape aside from the national/state parks and urban centers. You'd think the British were coming or something. The good news

is that black bears have returned to the Chisos Mountains of southern Texas on their own after decades of absence, apparently by swimming across the Rio Grande from the Mexican Carmen Mountains. Considering that black bears were not hunted out of the northern Mexican mountains, perhaps Mexico has been a better steward of wildlife than we've been. Birding, camping, and hiking the Chisos of Big Bend were superb and very rewarding. There are more documented species of birds there than in any other national park. The presence of a healthy population of panthers there also makes you think carefully and plan your forays accordingly, adding an element of risk and excitement about experiencing one of the truly wild places. I was alone on my hikes and camp-outs!

The big migration is now upon us here in Pennsylvania and we don't have to go to Texas to see and hear it. Sign up for a weekend of "Mason-Dixon Birding" at our May meeting and enjoy it with fellow birders and ornithologists! See you in Mont Alto.

--Bob Ross, President

AMERICA'S MID-WINTER SURVEY REPORTS RECORD COUNT OF BALD EAGLES

Early results of the mid-winter Bald Eagle Survey indicate a large increase in the number of Bald Eagles in Pennsylvania this January. The survey has been conducted during the second full weekend of January for at least ten years and has documented a significant growth in the number of eagles in Pennsylvania in winter, just as the breeding population has expanded. An effort is made to count all eagles across the state. Surveys are made by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel across western Pennsylvania and New York; DEC personnel fly the Delaware River; New Jersey DFGW patrol the Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area, while Game Commission personnel and birders fill in many other gaps.

Highlights this year include some of the highest concentrations of eagles ever reported in Pennsylvania. Voni and Joe Strasser, covering an eight-mile stretch of the Lacawaxen River below Lake Wallenpaupack, counted 44 Bald Eagles, 20 adults and 24 immatures,

on January 13. Also that day, NYDEC personnel counted 40 eagles along the Delaware River between Port Jervis and Hancock, NY. In addition, 28 eagles including several Golden Eagles were counted by NJ personnel in the National Water Gap Recreation Area. Combined, 112 eagles were counted. While it is possible that a few individuals may have been counted by different teams, it is more likely that some birds were missed and the number is even greater. Ninety-nine eagles were counted along the whole upper Delaware in 1995, so the total is not unprecedented.

Another highlight included four adult Bald Eagles counted in Philadelphia as part of Keith Russell's winter survey of the county. Chotty Sprenkle, of the Lancaster County Conservation District, coordinated the count of the lower Susquehanna River, netting 12 eagles (an average count); Rob Criswell of the Game Commission counted 6 eagles on Lake Raystown; and 11 eagles, mostly local residents, were counted around the Pymatuning area. Ted Grisez had 5 eagles around the Kinzua Dam (Warren Co), and additional eagles along the Allegheny River in Armstrong County will push the statewide total over 150 eagles, a new record.

FUTURE PSO MEETINGS: If your local Audubon Society or bird club is willing to host future PSO meetings, please contact President Bob Ross.
(717) 376-5394 (home) or 724-3322 (work)
rossr@epix.net

GREAT BLUE HERON NESTING SITES SURVEY REQUEST

by Deb Siefken

Every five years the nongame bird program of the Pennsylvania Game Commission organizes a survey of all known **Great Blue Heron** nesting sites. This project could not be accomplished without the help of you and the many bird enthusiasts who are willing to go into the field to gather this information.

The goals are: 1) to confirm that sites are still active, 2) to count active nests at these sites, and 3) to

identify new nesting areas. Additional information desired is an accurate sketch of the colony location, the landowner's name and address, estimate of colony size, and any current or possible future threats to the nesting area. The best time to conduct a survey is before leaf-out, between mid-April and early-May.

Listed below by county are **Great Blue Heron** nesting areas believed to be active, the last year a survey was reported, and the number of active nests. To minimize disturbance, or to find out where a colony is located, please contact the county compiler in which

the site occurs, before surveying a colony. The compiler will furnish you with the proper survey forms and coordinate those people willing to participate. If you know of any additional sites not listed, please follow the same procedure to avoid the "I thought someone else would do it" outcome. For more information, or if no compiler is listed in the county you could survey, contact Deb Siefken (717-677-4830) at the address below, or Dan Brauning, (717-547-6938 or brauning@mail.csrlink.net).

1494 Mountain Rd., Orrtanna, PA 17353
siefkend@cvn.net

KNOWN GREAT BLUE HERON COLONIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

With last year surveyed and number of active nests, by county

Adams Lake Heritage - 1996 - 3	Wolf Run - 1992 - 11	Sullivan Celestial Lake - 1990 - 6 Dutchman Swamp - 1995 - 6
Armstrong Frogtown - 1992 - 8	Eric Conneaut Creek - 1977 - ? Juva* - 1996 - 118 New Ireland* - 1996 - 50 Waterford - 1992 - 129	Susquehanna Dr. Lutz's Woods* - 1996 - 95 High Bridge* - 1995 - 15 Lenox* - 1996 - 37 SGL #35 - 1995 - 20 Smokey Mtn. - 1983 - 14
Berks Oley - 1994 - 16	Greene Dunn's Station - 1987 - 3 Harry Farm - 1992 - 36	Tioga Calkins - 1993 - 12 Hogback - 1993 - 24 Knoxville - 1984 - 40 Tioga Hammond - 1984 - 34
Bradford Burnham Hill - 1992 - 43 East Troy - 1992 - 25 Foster Branch - 1995 - 37 Leroy - 1992 - Sugar Creek - 1995 - 40 NE Bradford - 1992 - 25 SGL #36 - 1994 - 1	Jefferson Munderf Area - 1996 - 10	Warren Biddle Estate - 1993 - 6 Clark Run - 1985 - 6 McGraw Hill - 1993 - 4 Penzoil - 1992 - 2 SGL #86 - 1993 - 5
Bucks Quakertown - 1996 - 25	Lawrence Harlansburg - 1988 - 8	Washington Avella - 1992 - 20 Canonsburg - 1992 - 20 Raccoon Creek - 1992 - 32 West Middletown - 1983 - 14
Butler Lake Arthur - 1995 - 3 Todd Sanctuary - 1995 - 11	Luzerne Bear Hollow - 1996 - 3	Wayne E Branch Dyberry - 1984 - 41 Silkman's Swamp* - 1994 - 13 W Damascus* - 1994 - 13
Clarion Clarion River - 1995 - 6	Lycoming English Center - 1994 - 12	Wyoming Mehoopany - 1996 - 30
Clinton Lebo Run - 1992 - 8 Rosecrans - 1992 - 8	McKean Marsh's Orchard - 1984 - 7 Tionesta N. A. - 1985 - 5	
Crawford Carpenter Road - 1992 - 11 Cochranton - 1992 - 22 Conneautee* - 1995 - 62 Union City - 1985 - 27 Woodcock Ck* - 1995 - 17	Mercer Barrows - 1995 - 213 Brucker - 1995 - 121 Brucker 2 - 1989 - 2 Cogan & Conti - 1985 - 12 Deniker - 1992 - 3 Pine Run - 1994 - 23 Wolf Creek - 1994 - 5	
Elk Shawmut - 1986 - 37	Potter Lehman Run - 1992 - 15	

*These sites are being surveyed by Pennsylvania Game Commission technicians.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Undercut Again!

by Alan Gregory

The recent news from Harrisburg that the Pennsylvania Game Commission will not acquire additional land this year is indicative of a nationwide problem--a lack of money to acquire and preserve wildlife habitat and wild lands. Congress approved a grand idea in 1964 that was supposed to help, but the Land and Water Conservation Fund--funded not by tax dollars but by receipts from offshore gas and oil leases--has never reached its full potential because our lawmakers continue to undercut the fund. If Congress does not authorize spending the \$900 million that accrues in the fund each year, then it languishes or is funneled off elsewhere. The 104th Congress dropped the fund's spending level to just \$138 million, the lowest since 1974.

Now these funds help not only our federal land management agencies like the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service but also state-level agencies like the Game Commission. At the state level, money from the fund has helped state agencies acquire properties they might otherwise have lost. Not this year, though. "The erosion of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, supporters say, is due to the fact that most citizens do not know it exists," notes an item in the *Ornithological Newsletter*.

Advocates for preserving Pennsylvania's wild lands and wildlife can help by letting our lawmakers know that we want the full amount appropriated each year and spent where it ought to be--to acquire and manage land for the public trust. On the state level, we can press our governor and legislators to initiate and seek funding for an aggressive statewide land acquisition program.

New York is buying land in the Adirondacks and Florida is purchasing wildlife habitat in a state where the green landscape means tourism dollars. New Jersey also has an active wildlife habitat and open space preservation program. Political pork, no. Conserving wildlife and wild lands, yes.

The Conservation Page

The Anti-Environmental Movement-- Their Propaganda

For a number of years, anti-environmental groups were not particularly successful with their attacks on the environment because they failed to gain popular support for their proposals. However, these same groups learned from their mistakes and after studying ways to gain popular support, have initiated a strong grassroots program. Their new tactics, among other things, rely on the widespread use of misleading information.

This tactic, misleading information, has led to the creation of so-called "horror" stories where innocent citizens have been penalized as a result of environmental regulations. The fact is, these "horror" stories are either the result of distorted truth or, in a few cases, a total fabrication. Environmental regulations in general have had "horror" stories about them, but in particular the Endangered Species Act and wetland regulations have been targeted.

Because of the widespread use of this kind of propaganda, I thought it would be beneficial to PSO members to relate a few of the more egregious stories and then provide the reality behind the "horror." In selecting the stories, I have tried to choose a representative sample that illustrates the extremes that the anti-environmental groups will go to in order to deceive the public.

"HORROR" STORY #1

The Endangered Species Act has received vicious attacks, so I thought I would start with a widespread story about this Act. The story is the claim that the Endangered Species Act has brought development across the country to a halt.

REALITY of #1

Properly implemented and enforced, the Endangered Species Act successfully balances economic needs with conservation needs--as evidenced by the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service's consultation record. Endangered Species Act listings rarely require a substantial change in plans for development.

A 1992 General Accounting Office audit found that of 18,211 consultations between 1988 and 1992, 99.9 % went forward unchanged or with minor modifications. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study, "Endangered Species Listings and State Economic Development," completed by Stephen M. Meyer in 1994 for the Project on Environmental Politics and Policy, concluded that "...the evidence strongly contradicts the assertion that the listing of species under the Endangered Species Act has had harmful effects on state economies." (Source: Endangered Species Coalition, Washington, D.C.) Note: In a recent conversation with a representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pennsylvania office, no projects have been stopped in the state because of the Endangered Species Act.

HORROR STORY #2

Another Endangered Species Act example is the following. In testimony before the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in April 1992, a representative of the National Cattlemen's Association told of a widow near Austin, Texas, who wanted to clear her fencerow of brush, only to be threatened with prosecution by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

REALITY OF #2

The woman was advised by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that her clearing of a 30-foot wide, one-mile long fencerow might harm endangered songbird nesting habitat. After meeting with the woman and further assessment, the Service gave her the go-ahead to clear the fencerow. (Source: National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C.)

HORROR STORY #3

Wetlands, like endangered species, are repeatedly attacked by anti-environmental groups. One of the most repeated and emotionally charged wetlands horror stories involves an elderly woman who could not plant a rose garden in her low-lying front yard because it was a wetland.

REALITY OF #3

This story apparently originated in remarks by U.S. Rep. Jimmy Hayes (LA). Rep. Hayes has sponsored bills that would destroy wetlands protection programs and is no friend of wetlands. No one, however, has been able to verify the authenticity of the rose garden story. After an extensive nationwide research by third parties, it has become clear the elderly woman and the rose garden do not even exist! (Source: National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C.)

HORROR STORY #4

PWF members may find this Pennsylvania wetland "horror" story particularly interesting. The news media and members of Congress have repeated the story of John Pozsgai, an alleged "innocent victim," whose American dream was shattered when he was sentenced to jail and fined \$200,000 for illegally filling wetlands to expand his mechanic shop. Some claim he was cleaning up an old dump.

REALITY OF #4

John Pozsgai was far from innocent. He knew the property was a wetland because his consultants informed him before buying it. Mr. Pozsgai then completely ignored repeated warnings that he needed a permit before filling/building. He was given a court order to stop and ignored that as well. In court, Pozsgai was so unyielding that the judge was forced to recommend that Pozsgai's attorney inform him of the penalties for perjury. Had he cooperated with the agencies rather than continue to stubbornly ignore them and violate the law, Pozsgai would have likely received his permit and never have been taken to court. (Source: National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C.)

HORROR STORY #5

Even the Clean Water Act has its share of "horror" stories. One story is that Anchorage, Alaska, is being forced to dump fish waste into its waters in order to meet federal sewage treatment requirements.

REALITY OF #5

Neither Anchorage, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, nor state regulations required or asked fish

processors to add their waste to the city's sewage system. In fact, in 1989, the industry asked the city to take its waste to avoid more expensive hauling and disposal options. The city did have difficulty in meeting federal requirements, but this was due to leaky sewers. (Source: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.)

HORROR STORY #6

Another clean water "horror" story involves the city of Dallas, TX. In this story, the Clean Water Act is claimed to be so burdensome that Dallas is being forced to spend \$3 billion to fix overflows of raw sewage from its sewer system that only happen once or twice a year at one or two locations.

REALITY OF #6

Like some other cities in the country, Dallas has a sewer system that cannot contain all of the stormwater that leaks into sewer lines during and after storms. In 1993, Dallas had more than 120 overflows of raw sewage from its sewer system. In 1994, approximately 70 overflows were reported occurring at more than 65 places throughout the city. When they happen, raw sewage pours out of the city's sewer lines onto areas with high public use like streets, residential areas, and park lands. Pedestrians walking on sidewalks or standing by crosswalks risk being splashed with raw sewage by passing cars. Soccer fields where children play are sometimes littered with toilet paper and fecal material.

Dallas and the federal government have agreed to a schedule for fixing these problems by September 1999, the date requested by the city. According to documents filed by the city's Utility Department, the total cost of the project is estimated to be less than 7% of the rumored cost. (Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.)

HORROR STORY #7

Another Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, has also gotten its share of "horror" stories. According to one story, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requires all communities to monitor drinking water supplies for a pesticide that was only used in Hawaii to

grow pineapples.

REALITY OF #7

The so-called "pineapple pesticide" is dibromochloropropane (DBCP), a pesticide that until 1979 was used on pineapples as well as more than 40 other crops including cotton, soybeans, and vegetables. The pesticide has been detected in ground water and/or surface water supplies in 24 out of 37 states. Nineteen states reported DBCP levels in drinking water systems that were at or above the federal drinking water standard. DBCP is considered a probable human carcinogen and is highly persistent in the environment.

Despite the misconception, drinking water facilities are not required to monitor under the Safe Drinking Water Act if the state determines that the chemical was never used in an area. Thirty states now have programs to allow for "waivers" for monitoring. (Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.)

There are many other so-called "horror" stories being told but I hope the above examples give you a "flavor" of what is happening. This is not to say that there aren't inequities--there are and where they exist, need to be corrected. However, as illustrated by the above examples, as an organization and as conservationists, we need to be aware of and counter the intentional spread of falsehoods through the truth. In this way, we can continue to provide effective conservation education programs, support efficient environmental protection regulations and promote a true conservation agenda.

Mark Henry, Conservation Editor, P.O. Box 410, Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868





Raven Reporter

News of the Special Areas Project

Over 2500 SAP Field Trips Add Up To an Amazing Volunteer Value

The Special Areas Project has passed the 2500 field trip milestone. This represents over 7500 party hours at 76 locations across the Commonwealth. If we make the conservative assumption that each party-hour involved two people and consider the time it takes to travel to SAP locations and manage the data forms, the 7500 party hours probably represents at least 30,000 person hours. With a little financial conversion, the value of the volunteer effort for Special Area Project field trips can be estimated at a conservative \$240,000 in terms of people's time. This is an almost quarter-million dollars of volunteer effort for a grassroots project run on a shoestring budget. That's lots of bang for the buck!

The value of any volunteer effort of this scale is inestimable. Everyone who has made personal discoveries and revelations while running a SAP would claim that it is really impossible to put a dollar value on this kind of experience. From my vantage point, I hear of many new friendships made between birding SAP participants. It is hard to put a dollar figure on these personal bonds. I added the numbers together to just give this project a monetary perspective, but people's personal time and their experiences are worth more than money can buy. A big thank you to everyone who has given their valuable time to the project. The data are adding up to a great effort across the state and a remarkable success coming from humble beginnings.

Why Many IBAs Should be Adopted as SAPs

The National Audubon Society has announced the list of Important Bird Areas in Pennsylvania. Some 70 locations were picked by the Ornithological Technical Committee which acted as the scientific advisory panel for the IBA. It was very difficult to pick only 70 locations over the state when there are so many great places to observe birds in Pennsylvania. Many locations selected as IBAs often represent a large number of similar locations with characteristics that are important to support viable populations of birds. There are many places that are important regionally that could not be listed.

There is a paucity of data for many locations listed as Important Bird Areas. Basic bird population data is important to monitor the status and abundance of the birds that regularly occur there. There is a great need to document the breeding species and relative abundance in each season for each of these locations. If the regular breeding species decline, then the health of the habitat might also be declining. The IBA project will shine a light on these locations. It is important for us to keep our eyes and ears tuned to the locations listed in this project. They represent the best that Pennsylvania has to offer.

Last year I offered a SAP Wish List in the PSO Newsletter. I invite all of you to revisit that list and ask yourself if you can contribute more data to SAP by adopting one of these locations as a Special Area. Many of the SAP Wish List locations have turned up on the Pennsylvania IBA List. A handful of them have been adopted as SAPs and have been mentioned in the Newsletter as new projects. A few IBAs that really stand out as good candidates for SAPs are: South Mountain/Caledonia State Park, Tall Timbers (including Snyder-Middleswarth Natural Area), Raccoon Creek State Park, Quakertown Marsh (SGL 139), "The Hook" Natural Area, Enlow Fork (SGL 302), Black Moshannon State Park, Bruce Lake Natural Area, David Roderick Reserve (SGL 314), and The Glades (SGL 95). This is, of course, only a partial list. You will hear of more locations during the upcoming meeting and in future *Raven Reporters*. During the IBA selection process, the OTC often was not able to justify the selection of a location because there was a lack of published or public data about its bird populations. Some SAP locations were selected

because the data revealed that they fit at least one of the IBA criteria. Other locations might have been selected if the information was available. In short, if a place near you is an IBA--or you think it deserves to be an IBA, you should adopt it as a Special Areas Project.

Congratulations to *Pennsylvania Birds* for Ten Years of Excellence

The state's bird journal, *Pennsylvania Birds*, does a marvelous job reporting the state's birds. It is especially good at providing a forum for the state's rare and unusual bird events. In recent years, this journal has done an even better job of providing the means to document the phenology and trends observed by the state's birders. The various anecdotal observations are organized extremely well in the spreadsheet-style seasonal reports. In my view, this is the very best state bird journal. Frank and Barb Haas deserve our gratitude and cooperation to keep it alive and growing. Congratulations!

From the very start of the SAP, volunteers were encouraged to share their SAP bird observations with the readers of *PA Birds*. The Seasonal Report data sheets provide an easy way to review phenological and population data for reports to *PA Birds*, *Audubon Field Notes*, or local bird club and Audubon Chapter newsletters. In plain English, this means that it is easier to find the first and last dates for species and the high numbers with SAP data in hand. The SAP report period was deliberately staggered from the *PA Bird* quarterly periods to ease some of the workload from the many county coordinators and local experts who became SAP Local Coordinators. One of the results of *PA Birds* and SAP is that more people are now providing local leadership in collecting bird data. More of us have data readily at hand when our county *PA Birds* editor makes the quarterly call for bird data. Please help your county editor by providing SAP data for quarterly reports. Even the numbers of fairly common birds can be very revealing about trends in birds and their habitats.

Revising SAP Forms and Instructions

The PSO Special Areas Project was conceived in 1990, and it is time to revisit and revise the instructions and forms that have served the program so

well. It is my hope to have the forms revised in time for distribution at the PSO Annual Meeting at Mont Alto. I will be revising these forms to reflect changes in bird names and to improve the ease of data transfer from Daily Field Sheets to the Seasonal Forms. The forms will stay basically the same in order to maintain consistency with past forms and methods. The new forms will allow more write-in species names on the daily sheet. It will also highlight the species on the PORC list of species needing extra documentation (this list did not exist when SAP started). This will give a more consistent message to Pennsylvania birders who use the *PA Birds* Checklist and want their rare bird reports to be accepted by PORC and the Special Areas Project. The Seasonal Form will use more lines and shading to minimize incorrect data transfer from daily sheets. In this way, it will more closely resemble the newer BBS sheets with which many of you are familiar. Hopefully, this will also minimize data entry errors and the time it takes to check and correct them. The new Seasonal Report forms will also have a few more cues for the field trip conditions (temperatures are in Fahrenheit, party hours in tenths of an hour, etc.) This will make data entry easier for everyone.

If nothing else, the new forms will have "Eastern Towhee" and other names that we all must learn to use again or for the first time.

If you have any suggestions for improving the SAP Instructions and Forms, please feel free to send notes, letters, or e-mail to Doug Gross. I do listen to criticism and helpful ideas.

Winter Warriors in the Poconos

In the Raven Reporter, I have often cast a light on certain SAP volunteers who have made important contributions to the project. There are so many that I have difficulties trying to pick just a few to highlight. This time I would like to publicly thank two energetic and dedicated "little old ladies in tennis shoes" that have adopted Promised Land State Park as their personal Special Area. Rosann Bongey and Mary Kay Coleman braved the icy roads of the Poconos to gather bird data for the project. The birds were fairly quiet this last winter, but the Promised Land team found Red-breasted Nuthatch when few others have reported it. They have conducted over 20 trips to Promised Land over the last year. Except for the Hickory Run

Eighth Annual PSO Meeting
Penn State University--Mount Alto Campus
May 16-18, 1997

Friday, May 16, 1997

5:00 to 9:00 p.m.	Registration at Continuing Education Center
5:00 to 10:00 p.m.	Check-in at Penn Gate II Residence Halls
7:00 to 8:00 p.m.	Social at Continuing Education Center
8:00 to 8:45 p.m.	PSO Business Meeting at Continuing Education Center
8:45 to 10:00 p.m.	Social

Saturday, May 17, 1997

6:00 to 6:30 a.m.	Breakfast (Continental--includes coffee, juice, tea, bagels, donuts)
6:30 to 11:30 a.m.	Field Trips
12:00 noon	Lunch at Food Court
	Welcome and Opening Remarks. Bob Ross , PSO President
1:00 to 1:45 p.m.	Bird Communities of Woodlots in an Agricultural Landscape. Greg Keller , Penn State graduate student
1:45 to 2:30 p.m.	The North American Migration Count. Jim Stasz , its founder and compiler
2:30 to 3:15 p.m.	An Update of the Special Areas Project. Doug Gross , SAP Coordinator
3:15 to 3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 to 4:15 p.m.	Survey Techniques for Saw-whet Owls. Dave Brinker , Maryland Department of Forests, Parks, and Wildlife
4:15 to 5:00 p.m.	Shorebird Identification. Rick Mellon , Environmental Consultant
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.	Social at the Food Court
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.	Banquet at Food Court Eirik Blom , Project Coordinator Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas Project

Sunday, May 18, 1997

6:00 to 6:30 a.m.	Breakfast (Same as Saturday's breakfast)
6:30 to 11:30 a.m.	Field Trips

Motels in the Mont Alto Area

Econo Lodge (717-264-8005) located on S.R. 316 just west of I-81, Exit 5. 1110 Sheller Avenue
Rates: \$42 to \$49
Hampton Inn (717-261-9185) located one block east on S.R. 316 from I-81, Exit 5. 955 Leshar Road
Rates: \$55 to \$62
Holiday Inn (717-263-3400) located at the junction of I-81 and S.R. 316, Exit 5. 1095 Wayne Avenue
Rates: \$55 to \$72

State Park SAP (Bernie and Paulette Morris), this is the biggest SAP effort in the mighty Poconos Mountains. The Nature Conservancy has declared the Poconos one of "the Last Great Places," but few birders have reported on the region lately. The young birders of the PSO should find these two ladies inspirational. Many complain about the difficulties of birding in the winter; a few hardy souls actually go out and do it. A furry "hats off" to Rosann and Mary Kay for giving us so much information about the birds of Promised Land. Good luck in your future birding adventures!

Please send SAP data (feathered or otherwise) and any inquiries to:

Douglas A. Gross
 PSO Special Areas Project Coordinator
 Susquehanna SES Environmental Laboratory
 R.R. 1, Box 1795
 Berwick, PA 18603

New Locations in the SAP Constellation

Here are some of the new locations being inventoried by the Special Areas Project volunteers. The addition of these locations rounds out SAP coverage of the state.

<u>Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>
Clear Creek S.P.	Forest/Jefferson	John Fedak
Hopewell Furnace	Berks	Roger Stone
Kyle Lake	Jefferson	John Fedak
SGL 66 "Shady Nook"	Sullivan	Skip Conant
SGL 137	Armstrong	John Fedak
SGL 284 "Pennsy"	Mercer/Lawrence	Linda Wagner
Tyler State Park	Bucks	Mickey Wesler

Nominees and/or Volunteers Needed

Three positions on the PSO Board of Directors will be open for election in May. If you would like to volunteer or to nominate someone else to fill one of these positions, contact Bob Ross, R.R. 2, Box 113A, Wellsboro, PA 16901. Phone: (717) 376-5394 (home); (717) 374-8822 (work). rossb@psa.net

Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology
 c/o R. V. Higbee
 R.R. 2, Box 166
 Indiana, PA 15701

