FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK....

It's A Wonderful (Birding) Life

Jimmy Stewart, the All-American actor and star of many Frank Capra movies was born in Indiana, Pennsylvania, where we are holding our annual meeting. There’s a museum in Indiana to prove it. Jimmy was known for starring in many cinematic classics. Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, The Philadelphia Story, and Harvey are among the many that come to mind. If you want to be noticed, there’s nothing like talking to an invisible six-foot rabbit. (For anyone too young to remember, that was Harvey).

One of our favorites and perhaps the ultimate yuletime movie is It's a Wonderful Life. That’s the one where Jimmy Stewart played the small town hero, George Bailey of the good ol’ Bailey Building and Loan, the only thing that keeps old man Potter from running everything in Bedford Falls. If you have not watched this movie umpteen times and don’t have every line memorized, then you must not live in our house. We can turn down the sound and fill in the dialogue and the sound effects, especially for that crow that looks and sounds just a bit like a raven.

Bedford Falls could be in Pennsylvania. It’s a small town where everybody knows everybody only too well. It is comforting, but suffocatingly familiar for a “bright young man” trying to get somewhere in life like our George Bailey. You hardly need to put on your turn signal because everyone knows where you’re headed.

Yet, George Bailey discovered that when the chips were down he had a lot more friends than he ever dreamed he had. His neighbors knew what he was like in the worst of times, desperately dripping wet with a bleeding lip and mussed up hair, and accepted him for who he was. The lesson our movie hero learned is that in a community you touch everyone’s life. The little things that seemed trivial or annoyingly familiar one day become precious when your world is turned upside down.

Yes, It’s a Wonderful Life is a little “Capra corny,” but it touches on a truth about the value of communities and the little things in life that most of us take for granted, but these are the things that really count. In current crazy times, a lot of us have become more appreciative of the little things that make each day special. When planes start colliding with big buildings and war threatens to upend everything that we know, life tends to focus our attention. The little stuff counts. Our neighbors become important. We don’t take things for granted anymore.

I hope all of you come to our meeting at Indiana, Pennsylvania, the home of Jimmy Stewart and the Todd Bird Club. The local committee has put together a terrific line-up of field trips. Todd Bird Club experts will share the local birding hotspots that will help us get to know Indiana County. There’s nothing like getting a personal tour by the best guides! Each meeting we spend more time in the field than anywhere else. Our meeting will emphasize the upcoming Atlas — an exciting prospect for us, the state’s birding community. It will be loads of fun.

All that said, the meeting highlight is always getting to see our friends again and sharing in our discoveries and enjoyments. Electronic mail and phones are convenient but no substitute for seeing good people with their boots wet and their hair mussed up.

We’ll see a lot of birds and may even find Zuzu’s petals. See you at Indiana!

- Doug Gross
The Conservation Corner

Drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was rejected last year by a bipartisan vote in the U.S. Senate. The vote reflected public opinion that the Arctic Refuge should not be despoiled for the sake of a limited amount of petroleum.

However, now that the Republicans are in control of the U.S. Senate, there is a new scheme to allow drilling for oil in the Arctic Refuge. The scheme is to attach an amendment to the budget reconciliation measure that will allow for oil drilling. What makes this attack even more insidious is that the amendment won’t be open to public debate and can’t be stalled by a filibuster. Further, by putting this amendment on the budget reconciliation, the eight Republican Senators who voted against drilling last year will be under a lot of pressure to change their vote so that the budget measure will pass. This approach is a “sneak attack” on the Arctic Refuge and must be stopped.

As PSO members are aware, the Arctic Refuge is a pristine area where numerous species of wildlife breed, including many migratory birds. To despoil the Refuge and upset wildlife breeding areas for the sake of a limited amount of oil is, in the opinion of many, unconscionable and unwarranted. So, once again, PSO members are being asked to contact their federal legislators to voice their opposition to drilling in the Arctic Refuge. Letters to Senator Arlen Specter and Senator Rick Santorum can be sent to the Senators at the following addresses: U.S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510. Senator Specter’s telephone number is 202-224-4254 and Senator Santorum’s number is 202-224-6324. Letters to your Representative can be sent to U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515. Please take the time to contact your legislators – the fate of the Arctic Refuge is up for grabs and we can make a difference.

- Mark Henry
Conservation Chairperson

The Raven Reporter

Tales of Discovery from the Special Areas Project

SAP Progress

The Special Areas Project continues to grow in quantity and quality of data. The SAP database now includes 6118 field trips taken in 127 locations throughout the Commonwealth. The newest SAP areas were listed in the last “Raven Reporter.” Volunteers have contributed more than 17,000 party hours to the project. Since each SAP “party hour” represents at least 2 people, birders have spent at least 34,000 hours collecting bird data in Special Areas. This is a tremendous success because it represents a continued commitment to “birding with a purpose” by members of the society.

Gifford Pinchot State Park Has a New Coordinator

We would like to publicly thank and congratulate Pat Sabold for her contributions to the Special Areas Project. She has really taken the bull by the horns at Gifford Pinchot. Pat has replaced the redoubtable Grace Randolph as the SAP coordinator at this popular state park. Many of you know Pat as “Vireogirl” on the PA Birds list server.

Gifford Pinchot State Park bird data are valuable because this York County park serves as a recreational focus for the urbanites of the Harrisburg-York area. It is the place where many neophyte birdwatchers are introduced to a natural community of birds. With its woods and small lake, Gifford Pinchot offers a variety of habitats and bird species. It is a good place to start birding adventures and a nice place to escape the busy urban life.

Pat has collected a lot of bird data since 2001 when she accepted the role as SAP Coordinator at Gifford Pinchot. She recently sent in 41 field trips from 2001 and another 28 from 2002. That is a lot of bird data. Wisely, she is providing the park staff with her data. This simple act informs and educates the people who are responsible for managing its resources and educating the public about the nature found there.
there, too. This really shows leadership and initiative. I am very grateful and appreciative of Pat’s efforts, and I hope all of you recognize her for her fantastic contributions. We need more birders like the “vireogirl.”

SAP as an Atlas Training Technique

Pennsylvania is going to begin its second Breeding Bird Atlas in 2004. The first Atlas, conducted from 1983 through 1989, was a tremendous success. It started tentatively with the first year as a “test year.” In that first year, 45 individual birders collected data in 192 blocks. The Atlas grew each year after that in interest, data-gathering, and expertise of the volunteers. Back in those days, the Pennsylvania birding community was very fragmented and disjointed. There was no state bird society (that’s PSO), no Pennsylvania Birds, no Audubon Important Bird Areas projects, no Cornell University projects, and there was no computer network of information flow that we all take for granted today. It was difficult to find local birding leaders to act as regional coordinators back then.

Atlas veterans know that the second round will have many advantages over the first but will pose its own challenges. For one, there are many more birders in the state, but they are still distributed unequally over the state. If you peruse the PA Birds network or our magazine, you will notice that many locations get an abundance of attention and reports while some counties go unreported. Birders converge on hot-spots with known rarities, but the remote forests, swamps, and barrens are rarely reported. In the next Atlas, all of these locations will need to be reported. Many birders are astute at identification, but have little experience with observing and recording breeding bird behavior. It might be a good idea to start early by mentoring newer birders by using the SAP techniques. SAP uses the standard breeding codes that are useful for recording breeding bird behavior. SAP also emphasizes searches for rare or hard-to-find birds. These will be very useful skills for the next Atlas.

The Pennsylvania birding community can get a jump on the next generation Atlas by teaching its members more about basic birding techniques now. Take more people on SAP trips and emphasize the breeding bird data gathering. Make special efforts to find those elusive night birds, marsh birds, and diurnal raptors. Get the gang primed up before we reach the starting gate. SAP just isn’t a project, it is a mentoring and training ground for the next generation of successful Atlas volunteers.

Pennsylvania’s Natural and Wild Areas

The Special Areas Project has focused on the state’s natural and wild areas. Volunteers have gathered data in several locations throughout the state that have been designated as natural, wild, scenic, or wilderness areas by the DCNR Department of Forestry, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), local governments, private organizations, and private land-owners. Thanks to all of you for contributing this extremely valuable data to the Special Areas inventory. A summary of these locations is given on the following pages in tabular form. As you can see, some locations have been birded extremely well. I would especially like to recognize Greg Grove, Nick Bolgiano, Margaret Higbee, Edie Parnum, and Margaret Buckwalter for contributing more than 50 SAP trips to this cause. In future editions, I will review data collected in our natural area SAPs and give more credit to the birders who have collected bird data there.

In 2003, we would like to target natural and wild areas for SAP inventory. In the year before the Atlas, these locations could inspire us to give the next Atlas the complete coverage that it deserves. Inventories of natural and wild areas serve as benchmarks of healthy bird communities. When “natural communities” are under increased stress by development, fragmentation, and biological infestations (diseases, pests), our data collection may serve to remind Pennsylvanians of the value and importance of these best areas for breeding birds. With the hemlock woolly adelgid ravaging our state tree and the natural communities where it lives, bird inventories document how this tree provides habitat for many species.

Targeting these natural and wild areas will give the state’s birders an excuse to explore the deepest part of the state’s forests. That will give a head start at the Atlas’s complete state coverage.

Please consider taking the Natural Area challenge and adopt a Natural or Wild Area for your birding away from home. If you are yearning for something different from the usual birding grind, grab your binoculars and a map and head for the mountains. Many of the most remote and wild locations of the state remain unexplored and undocumented by the state’s birders. Since most natural areas are forested rather than a mosaic of habitats, the species lists may not be very long. However, they may have large number of many forest interior or area-sensitive birds not commonly found elsewhere—large populations of Cerulean Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Black-throated Blue Warbler, or Swainson’s Thrush. City-bound birders would revel in some of our natural and wild areas where Hermit Thrush and Black-throated Green Warbler are among the most common breeding species.
SAP would very much appreciate more data from those locations that have ten or fewer field trips in its database (see the first table below) and any of the locations listed in the second table on the next page.

### Pennsylvania's Natural and Wild Areas That Have Been Inventoried by Special Areas Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>SAP Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam’s Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>TNC/Private</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Seeger Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Over 100 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algerine Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Lycoming</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bear Meadows Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>More than 50 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Creek Natural Area</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Clarion</td>
<td>More than 50 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Flat Laurel Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>More than 50 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacklick Valley Natural Area</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>More than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Lake Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Pike</td>
<td>More than 50 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detweiler’s Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Huntington</td>
<td>More than 100 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Dutlinger Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Masland Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammersley Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Clinton/Potter</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemlocks Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickory Creek Wilderness Area</td>
<td>ANF</td>
<td>Warren</td>
<td>More than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakey Hollow Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirby Park Natural Area</td>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>Luzerne</td>
<td>10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Pond Reserve</td>
<td>TNC/Municipal/County</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Creek Gorge Scenic Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Tioga</td>
<td>10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plummer’s Hollow Sanctuary</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec Run Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Fayette</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds Spring Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Tioga</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosecrans Bog Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarack Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickhead Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Centre/Huntington</td>
<td>More than 50 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tionesta Scenic Area</td>
<td>ANF</td>
<td>Warren/McKean</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Mile Run Preserve</td>
<td>TNC</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White’s Woods</td>
<td>Township</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf Run Wild Area</td>
<td>ANF</td>
<td>Lycoming</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wykoff Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Fewer than 10 trips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adopt a natural area and send in your data. Even a relatively small set of field trips could yield enough information to assemble a site checklist. There are no checklists for most natural areas in the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>County/Forest</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asaph Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Tioga/Tioga SF</td>
<td>Rugged, remote forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Ash Swamp</td>
<td>DCNR Tioga/Tioga SF</td>
<td>Old beaver meadow and swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckhorn Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Pike/Delaware SF</td>
<td>Mountain swamp and headwaters, ledges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucktail Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Clinton and Cameron/SproulSF</td>
<td>Huge scenic preserve along West Branch Susquehanna River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burn’s Run Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR Clinton/Sproul SF</td>
<td>Remote forest crossed by Chuck Keiper Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbaugh Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Adams/Caledonia SF</td>
<td>Pine-hemlock forest along good stream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Shade Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR Somerset/Gallitzen SF</td>
<td>Large deciduous forest, trout stream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberry Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Clinton/Sproul SF</td>
<td>Mountain bog along Chuck Keiper Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devil’s Elbow Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Lycoming/Tiadaghton SF</td>
<td>Headwater wetlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Branch Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Clinton/Sproul SF</td>
<td>Old growth hemlock forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Dam Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR Clinton/Sproul SF</td>
<td>Large isolated forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Chester/Valley Forge SF</td>
<td>Pitch pine and scrub oak barrens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hook Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Union/Bald Eagle SF</td>
<td>Large, remote forest; complete watershed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebo Pine Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Lycoming/Tiadaghton SF</td>
<td>Old growth red pine, white birch, oaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Juniata Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Huntington/Rothrock SF</td>
<td>Remote water gap forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Jerry Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Cameron and Clinton/Elk SF</td>
<td>Old growth hemlock and pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Hill Wild Area</td>
<td>DCNR Bedford/Buchanon SF</td>
<td>Rugged mountain forest in SE PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Lycoming/Tiadaghton SF</td>
<td>Huge, rugged forest with many streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Davis Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Somerset/Forbes SF</td>
<td>Highest point in PA, mixed oak forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennel Run Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Pike/Delaware SF</td>
<td>Poconos forest along Thunder Swamp Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snyder-Middleswarth Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Snyder/Bald Eagle SF</td>
<td>Virgin white pine and hemlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spruce Swamp Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Lackawanna/Lackawanna SF</td>
<td>Spruce forest and glacial bog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillwater Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Pike/Delaware SF</td>
<td>Regenerating hardwood, spruce and fir forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Root Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Bedford/Buchanon SF</td>
<td>Old growth hemlock and oak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall Timbers Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Snyder/Bald Eagle SF</td>
<td>Large oaks, white pines, and hemlocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tannersville Cranberry Bog</td>
<td>TNC Monroe/TNC</td>
<td>Boreal conifer bog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Mountain Natural Area</td>
<td>DCNR Union/Bald Eagle SF</td>
<td>Large forest along Penn’s Creek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For more information about the PSO Special Areas Project, please contact:

Douglas A. Gross  
PSO Special Areas Project Coordinator  
Susquehanna SES Environmental Laboratory  
804 Salem Boulevard  
Berwick, PA 18603

Phone: 570-542-2191  
e-mail: dougross@sunlink.net

Annual Meeting 2003

The 15th annual PSO meeting will be held May 16-18 in Indiana, PA, at the Holiday Inn, 1395 Wayne Avenue. Registration will begin at 5:00 p.m. on Friday. A social will be held at 7:00, followed by the business meeting at 8:00 p.m. Field trips will depart from the Holiday Inn at 6:30 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday.

Saturday’s Field Trips

Yellow Creek State Park – led by Gloria Lamer and Georgette Syster. This will be an easy trip with minimal walking to explore the main recreational area of the park. Shorebirds and late waterfowl are possible as well as a good assortment of passerines. Target species include Willow Flycatcher, migrant warblers, and Orchard and Baltimore Orioles. Black Terns are fairly regular. More than 100 species have been listed on a mid-May Big Day at Yellow Creek.

Yellow Creek State Park – led by John Taylor. This is a trip for the avid hiker/birder. We’ll climb hills and cover the interior of the park in search of vireos, warblers, and other passerines, but we will focus on warblers. One of our target species is Golden-winged Warbler which nests in the park.

Blue Spruce Co. Park – led by Ray Winstead and Steve Graff. Blue Spruce is one of the best places in the county for migrant passerines. We’ll hike several of the best trails in the park. Nesting species include Yellow-throated Vireo, Kentucky and Hooded Warblers, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Last year a “Brewster’s” warbler was on territory here for several months.

Blacklick Valley Natural Area – led by Lee Carnahan and Dory Jacobs. This mostly wooded area located east of Dilltown involves a long, but mostly level, walk. Target species are Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Black-throated Green Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and Purple Finches as well as a plethora of migrants. Am. Woodcock is a possibility.

West Lebanon-Elders Ridge Strip Trip – led by Marcy Cunkelman. This will be a mostly driving tour of the reclaimed strip mines on the Indiana-Armstrong Co. line with target species including Bobolinks and Henslow’s, Savannah, and Grasshopper Sparrows.

West Penn Trail – led by Len and Linda Hess. This is an easy, flat walk that has the potential to produce a good species list including Osprey, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Acadian Flycatcher, a variety of swallows, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Late waterfowl are possible.

Since Wild Turkeys are in season, please be sure to bring your fluorescent orange with you for our outings. There is no hunting at Blue Spruce or Blacklick Valley, but the remaining areas are all open to hunting.

Sunday’s Trips

The following field trips will be repeated on Sunday:

Yellow Creek State Park
Blue Spruce Co. Park
Blacklick Valley Natural Area

SGL 273 – led by Carol Guba and Patrick Snickles. This Sunday morning walk will explore our most consistent spot in the county for Worm-eating Warbler and a myriad of other breeding warblers including Black-throated Green Warbler, Am. Redstart, Black-and-white and Cerulean Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Canada and Kentucky Warblers. This outing will follow a Game Commission Road, but half of the walking will be uphill on a moderately steep slope.

Conemaugh Floodlands – led by Lee Carnahan. This area is noted for its nesting N. Bobwhites, Black-billed Cuckoos, Willow Flycatchers, White-eyed Vireos, Gray Catbirds, Brown Thrashers, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Baltimore Orioles. This is a long but level walk.

Conemaugh Dam – led by Marcy Cunkelman. We’ll start by hiking Woodchuck Trail then head to the river. Nesting species include Yellow-throated Vireo; Common Raven; N. Parula; Cerulean, Yellow-throated, and Hooded Warblers; and Louisiana Waterthrush.

Bow Ridge – led by Len and Linda Hess. This section of Conemaugh Dam boasts nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Persons</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Total $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSO Member</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member's spouse/guest</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Member</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Member's spouse/guest</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 18</td>
<td>$12.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Deadline, April 30, 2003</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Holiday Inn (724-463-3561): $79 if reservations made before April 30. Please state Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology meeting.

For other lodging options:
- Best Western University Inn 724-349-9620
- Comfort Inn 724-465-7000
- The Inn-Towner Motel 724-463-8726
- Scotts Motel 724-465-5571
- Super 8 724-349-4600
- Twin Pines Motel 724-465-6161

Campgrounds are about 20-30 minutes away:
- L&M Campground 724-479-3264
- Wheel-In Campground 724-354-3693
- Yellow Creek Campground 724-463-3860

**MEALS**

**Breakfast ON YOUR OWN**
(several convenience stores & fast food nearby)

**Lunch ON YOUR OWN**

Banquet Buffet $18.50
[Italian Baked Cod, Honey Lager Chicken, Baked Stuffed Shells (vegetarian), or Sliced Roasted Sirloin]

Banquet only $20.50
(no registration, sessions, or field trips)

**Sunday Breakfast ON YOUR OWN**

Please make checks or money orders payable to PSO and mail to:
Shonah A. Hunter
Dept. of Biological Sciences
Lock Haven University
Lock Haven, PA 17745

**Registration Deadline: April 30, 2003**
Indiana PSO Meeting Locations

- Blue Spruce County Park
- Yellow Creek State Park
- Elders Ridge-West Lebanon Strips
- Holiday Inn
- SGL 273
- Conemaugh Dam
- Conemaugh Floodlands
- Bow Ridge
- West Penn Trail
- Blacklick Valley Natural Area
as well as all the species listed above under Conemaugh Dam. There will be some overlap in these two trips, but the Conemaugh Dam group will start at the other end of the park.

**Prince Gallitzin State Park** – led by John Salvetti. This state park, located in nearby Cambria County, is an excellent place to find Sora and Virginia Rail, Northern Waterthrush, and Swamp Sparrow besides numerous migrant warblers. Late waterfowl and shorebirds are possible.

In addition, we are planning to hold pre- and post-meeting Yellow Creek field trips on both Friday, the 16th, and Monday, the 19th. Anyone who is interested in participating in the Friday trip should contact the Higbees at bcoriole@twd.net or 724-354-3493. You may sign up for the Monday morning trip at the meeting.

### Afternoon Sessions

Four afternoon programs have been planned beginning at 1:00 on Saturday:

- Learn how Pennsylvania's second Breeding Bird Atlas will differ from the first. Dan Brauning will give perspective in *Breeding Bird Atlasing – Past and Future in Pennsylvania and Surrounding Areas*.

- Tim O’Connell, who is designing the atlas methods for round two, will speak on *Sampling Design Considerations for Pennsylvania's Second Breeding Bird Atlas*.

- Bob Mulvihill, the coordinator for the second atlas project, will discuss his research at Powdermill Nature Reserve in *Powdermill’s Top 40! Highlights from Four Decades of Bird Banding*.

- Michael Carey, of the University of Scranton, who has conducted research on avian behavioral ecology and sociobiology, will present *Fifteen Years in an Old Field: Field Sparrow Breeding Biology*.

### Banquet

The banquet will be held at the Holiday Inn at 7:00 on Saturday evening. The buffet will include a choice of:

- Italian Baked Cod
- Honey Lager Chicken
- Baked Stuffed Shells (vegetarian)
- Sliced Roasted Sirloin

Meals also include rolls, tossed salad, potato, vegetable, coffee, tea, iced tea, and dessert.

The banquet speaker will be Game Commission biologist John Dunn. John will take us on an Arctic expedition in *North to Nunavut - Investigating the Ecology of Pennsylvania’s Migratory Geese and Swans*.

### Attention: Non-Birding Spouses

Don’t stay home and be bored! Come to Indiana, hometown of Jimmy Stewart, and visit the Jimmy Stewart Museum, located at the intersection of Philadelphia Street and North Ninth in Indiana. Stop by the life-sized statue of Jimmy in front of the courthouse next door. Travel east on Philadelphia Street, turn left onto Jimmy Stewart Boulevard, and proceed one block to the base of a long set of concrete steps that lead to Vinegar Hill. Jimmy's boyhood home stands at the top of the steps, on the left, and remains a private residence today.

Indiana County also boasts four covered bridges, so if you’re a covered bridge fan, there is a tour route mapped out for you. Maps will be available.

Biking is popular on the Hoodlebug and Ghost Town Trails. Visit nearby Eliza Furnace, a historic site, one of Pennsylvania’s best preserved iron furnaces dating back to 1846. The furnace is located near Dilltown along the Ghost Town Trail.

For the golfers, there are four golf courses in the nearby area.

Smicksburg, an Amish/English community located only one-half hour northwest of Indiana, offers shopping in a variety of small artisan and craft shops. Wingate Vineyard located near Smicksburg also offers tours.

For those non-birders with children who plan to stay at the Holiday Inn, the Holidome offers miniature golf, swimming, hot tubs, pool tables, a foose-ball table, and ping-pong.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania has two museums on campus, The Kipps Gallery in Sprowls Hall and the University Museum in John Sutton Hall. The latter is a nationally registered historic landmark. For more information, check [www.arts.iup.edu/museum](http://www.arts.iup.edu/museum). Other information concerning the county is available at [www.indiana-co-pa-tourism.org](http://www.indiana-co-pa-tourism.org) and at [www.indiana-countyparks.org](http://www.indiana-countyparks.org).
This could be an unusually good year for the Official List of the Birds of Pennsylvania. PORC is reviewing or awaiting documentation on five potential new species: Curlew Sandpiper, California Gull, Calliope Hummingbird, Lewis’s Woodpecker, and Cave Swallow. Another possible first, Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, will receive a third round of voting at one member’s request, after the committee failed to reach a consensus on the first two rounds.

Since the committee’s 11th report in February 2002, one new species has already been added: Hammond’s Flycatcher. Excellent written and photographic documentation was submitted for the famous bird at Monocacy Nature Center, Northampton County, in November-December 2000. Full details of its acceptance will be published in the committee’s next report in Pennsylvania Birds. Hammond’s previously had been considered hypothetical in the state because, as Jerry McWilliams and Dan Brauning explain in The Birds of Pennsylvania, “the only specimen collected in Pennsylvania was damaged, and the identity is in question.”

Meanwhile, Pennsylvania birders have been asking the committee about two waterfowl species. Here is an update:

1. After years of discussion, the committee has not added Barnacle Goose to the list of wild birds, despite at least 35 appearances in Pennsylvania. Virtually all state and provincial records committees are reluctant to list it because Barnacle Geese are widely and commonly bred by waterfowl propagators, and many cases of intentional and accidental releases have been documented.

Three records committee members, one each from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Connecticut, are collaborating on a major analysis of this species’ patterns of temporal and geographic occurrence in North America. They have compiled more than 300 records from the United States and Canada to date, and their hope is to offer a strong basis for informed judgments by committees across the continent—especially in the Northeastern and mid-Atlantic regions.

2. Trumpeter Swans are raising a brand new question for committees in a growing number of states in the East, Midwest, and South. Birds released from government-sponsored introduction projects during the last decade in Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Ontario have begun to travel far from “home.” In addition, increasing numbers of Trumpeters have been released and have escaped from private waterfowl breeders in New York and other states, and these birds are probably among the interstate wanderers as well.

Trumpeters are becoming frequent visitors in Pennsylvania, with more than 40 records in 17 counties since 1995. The reports have numbered one to six birds, and the overall total is about 80 individuals including some known repeats. Some have been unmarked young birds, which were possibly offspring of released or escaped swans that paired and bred in the wild. PORC will soon be discussing the species’ status.

For a dozen of the published records in Pennsylvania, neck collars or wing tags showed that the birds were released in Ohio or Ontario. In another half-dozen cases, the observers stated explicitly that there were no collars or tags (though of course this does not necessarily mean the birds were “wild”). Unfortunately the vast majority of reports offered no indication of whether the swans were collared, tagged, leg-banded, or not. If you see a Trumpeter, please report the presence or absence of markers to your county compiler.

Many of the introduced swans have stayed close to their release points, but others apparently have begun to show regular migration patterns. For example, one bird was collared and released in Ohio, then it paired with another Trumpeter in Ontario, migrated through western Pennsylvania, wintered in Virginia, and traveled back through western Pennsylvania to Ontario where it nested the next year. Cases like this may portend a time when descendants of released or escaped birds establish permanent, self-sustaining, wild populations in a number of states. Then at some unpredictable point in the future, the Trumpeter Swan could eventually join official lists of many eastern states including Pennsylvania where records committees are watching the situation closely.

- Paul Hess, PORC Chair
The Birder's Workshop
Develop Your Bird ID & Monitoring Skills

March 8, 2003  April 5, 2003
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Beechwood Farms  PP&L's Montour
Nature Reserve  Preserve
Pittsburgh, PA  Montour County, PA

Fee: $25.00 (includes snacks and handouts). Lunch will be provided.

Sponsored by: Audubon Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Game Commission, DCNR, and Wild Resources Conservation Fund

Why Have a Birder's Workshop?

Interest in birds continues to grow and as it does, so comes a need for greater information about bird populations. Many projects require the use of point counts and other methods that call for highly skilled birders, both as volunteers and as paid technicians. To address this growing need, Audubon Pennsylvania, DCNR, and the Pennsylvania Game Commission are teaming up to offer training on survey methods and bird identification. This training is geared to birders who already have solid abilities in bird identification, particularly visual ID. The workshop will focus on how to do point counts, strategies on counting & estimating bird numbers, challenging bird ID topics (such as flycatchers, raptors, etc.), and especially improving birding by ear skills. Anyone is welcome! We will attempt to match the training to your needs.

Program Overview

8:30 a.m. Registration begins
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Why Count Birds?
► Setting Up Point Counts
► Computer Data Entry and eBird
► IBAs and SAPs
► Bird ID Challenges — warblers, thrushes, vireos, flycatchers, sparrows, cuckoos, raptors, etc.— especially birding by ear

Included will be an outdoor field practice session

Instructors: Rob Blye, Doug Gross, Steve Hoffman, Jerry McWilliams

Any questions? Contact: Beth Sanders 717-213-6880 ext. 10; bsanders@audubon.org.

PSO Bird Quiz

How well do you know your Pennsylvania birds?

1. What familiar bird has a pinkish bill except in a limited area of its breeding range where its bill is bluish?

2. What rare winter visitors did Arthur Cleveland Bent call “birds of mystery; we never know when or where we may see these roving bands of gypsies”?

3. In The Birds of Pennsylvania, Jerry McWilliams and Dan Brauning said of one species, “Until a safe method of field identification is discovered ... [they] are likely to migrate through the state unidentified.” Which species?

4. What bird did Audubon think might just as well be called the “Pennsylvanian or Virginian rail”? (Don’t jump to a conclusion.)

5. Trying for humor in his Report on the Birds of Pennsylvania in 1890, B. H. Warren described the birds of one family as “notorious for their scolding propensity, and in this particular they are not unlike some females of the human race, whose chief object in life it would appear is to always annoy those about them.” Which family?

6. In 1812 Alexander Wilson described, painted, and named a bird for a mountain in Pennsylvania -- a bird that has never been identified later with certainty. What was its name?

See Answers on page 12
Where Should Development Go?

by Alan Gregory

The borough Monica and I live in, Conyngham, is going through the process right now of putting together its comprehensive plan. And like some other municipalities in the state, we decided to go into it jointly — with a neighboring township. This joint comprehensive plan is the document that will decide the future of the remaining wildlife habitat in our communities.

Where should new development go? Hopefully on lands of low conservation value.

What would you say when asked this question? Do you get involved in the decision-making process in your community?

Development is going to continue — growth is with us for the foreseeable future, even if there are finite limits. Decisions are made every day — every hour — regarding the future of wild areas within your neighborhood, your community.

Here are some of the notes I passed on to our planning commission. Look them over. Decide for yourself what you would say to your planning and development officials. Where do you think development should and should not go?

Of one thing we are certain, we must all get involved on the local level if just a percentage of the wildlife habitat that’s still out there will be there tomorrow and the next day and 10, 20, 50 years from now.

Where to put what

New development should be clustered and natural lands left — permanently — between the clusters. Wildlife should be given wide space in the form of forested corridors that link protected areas.

There should be no development within 300 feet of any permanent stream, seep, or spring, or other type of wetland. I heard an aquatic biologist say at a conference last year that only an entire hillside is adequate buffer for a trout stream. He’s right. In any case, all existing riparian forests should be left in place. And those streams whose riparian forests have been removed, in whole or in part, should be rehabilitated through aggressive reforestation efforts with native plants.

Keep the woodlots in place. While they provide little long-term protection for natural diversity on a large scale, such places are the links that keep many people in touch with nature. Thus, all remaining woodlots should be preserved, both for practical and aesthetic reasons. These places also serve as natural sponges, sucking up in their leaf litter and understory the water of melting snow and rainfall. Already heavy runoff, would increase exponentially should forested cover be lost.

The flooding that almost regularly occurs on lands above the floodplains of local streams — exacerbated by recent road-building and housing development — can be remedied, at least to some extent, by reforesting riparian zones. Not only do riparian forests serve as filters, removing contaminants from the runoff of nearby impervious surfaces such as roads, driveways, and rooftops, they also serve as wildlife corridors, allowing critters to move from one area to another with at least a minimum of blockages, such as roads.

In the township, keep the forested land as it is today. Air quality, whether most people know it or not, is declining in the valley. And this trend can be expected to continue — and worsen — with each house, with each new development, with each new road.

Subsidizing new development

Local officials rarely think beyond the taxes new development brings. But nearly all such growth is subsidized by existing taxpayers. In some cases, communities would be better off by buying and preserving all remaining natural lands, particularly forests, rather than continue subsidizing new growth.

Stop development on the slopes or tops of ridges surrounding the valley. Prohibit more development on the slopes or peak of the surrounding ridges. These forests are far too valuable, both aesthetically and functionally, to give up to development.

Mining

All valley municipalities must agree on where mining — particularly quarrying — will be allowed. Stringent controls on where it’s not appropriate should be enacted and enforced. The state Legislature should amend the Township Code to stop requiring that each and every township zone for all possible land uses.

Traffic

Traffic on Route 93 has quadrupled in the 13 years we’ve lived in Conyngham. Accident rates are rising. Noise rates are rising. Pollution is assuredly on the upswing. These
are all negatives that impact the quality of life of existing residents. While local government leaders see “growth” as desirable or even as a life or death struggle, it is, in fact, just the opposite. The search for additional tax revenue – usually accomplished through the subdividing of open space – carries great risks, both immediate and long-term. Tax revenue is one thing, but existing residents subsidize new growth. Study after study has documented this hidden cost – a cost (subsidy) to which local government leaders pay little or no heed. Existing property owners pay to support the new and/or expanded public services needed to accommodate new growth. Who’s paying for state troopers to respond to emergencies and crime scenes in Hazle Township and even here in the valley?

Roads

Build no new roads, especially in forested areas. Roads fragment habitat, making it less useful for a wide range of species, particularly forest-interior songbirds. Already, it is increasingly hard to find species such as the Wood Thrush, nesting in the shrinking woodlots of the valley. Many species are in decline. While a lot of folks don’t give a squat, this is a matter of preserving our natural heritage. Most folks, while they may not admit it or even be conscious of it, like to hear songbirds singing in the spring months. But there will come a time when only a few species hang on in the face of overwhelming development: starlings, crows, House Sparrows, house mice, rats.

Those are some of the points I made when asked for input.

What would you say?

Ornithological Literature Notes

[Editor’s note: This is the sixth in an occasional series highlighting recent publications of interest to Pennsylvania ornithologists and birders.]

Amanda and Paul Rodewald were well known to PSO members during their years of research in ecology and ornithology at Penn State, and they now have teaching and research positions at the Ohio State University. Each of them coauthored papers published in 2000 in The Wilson Bulletin:


This study in central Pennsylvania during May and June 1998 took a different approach from the many studies that have focused on the impact on birds of highly altered landscapes and extensive forest fragmentation. In this case the study area was heavily forested and had relatively limited disturbance by agriculture and clearcutting within a radius of one kilometer from the sites.

The data suggested that in landscapes with extensive and contiguous forest, Ovenbirds’ pairing success is not reduced by limited amounts of habitat loss in the surrounding landscape, but is primarily a function of local habitat characteristics. A particularly important characteristic appears to be depth of leaf litter (where Ovenbirds typically forage), which the authors found to be strongly associated with the ability of males to acquire mates.

The authors commented that in addition to studies of pairing and nesting success in highly modified landscapes, “Examination of these phenomena in relatively forested landscapes is essential to understand patterns and thresholds of habitat alteration that can be tolerated by sensitive forest birds.”

Use of successional habitat and fruit resources by songbirds during autumn migration in central New Jersey. Hannah B. Suthers, Jean M. Bickal, and Paul G. Rodewald (Vol. 112, No. 2, pp. 249-260).

Results of this long-term investigation showed that migrants’ habitat use differed according to the successional state and vegetative composition of the habitat. The abundance and/or quality of fruits, rather than the successional stage and vegetation structure alone, appeared to be the main attraction for migrants. Birds left successional habitats as fruit-bearing shrubs became overgrown by trees, and they increased their use of habitats as fruit resources increased.

Migrants favored shrubland dominated by panicled dogwood over shrubland dominated by red cedar or multiflora rose. The most favored fruiting vines overall were Japanese honeysuckle, Virginia creeper, poison ivy, and grape – though different species favored different fruits.

The authors emphasized that successional old fields with a diversity of fruiting shrubs and vines are an important resource for migratory birds that need to refuel for their journeys. They concluded, “Land managers should consider maintaining and enhancing existing native fruiting shrublands and edge habitats to insure that these resources remain available.”

- Paul Hess
PSO Newsletter

This newsletter is published four times a year by the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. To renew your membership, send your check made payable to "PSO" to:

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Answers to Bird Quiz on page 9:

1. Dark-eyed Junco. A bluish-billed Appalachian subspecies known as the Carolina Junco (Junco hyemalis carolinensis) reaches its northern breeding limit in the mountains of southwestern Pennsylvania.

2. Bohemian Waxwing.

3. Bicknell’s Thrush.

4. Sora.

5. The wrens. ☺

6. Blue Mountain Warbler. This mysterious bird is known only from Wilson's descriptions and paintings in his great classic, American Ornithology. He gave it the scientific name Sylvia montana.