

# PSO PILEATED



June 2004

*The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology*

Volume 15, Number 2

## From the President's Desk....

For the past four years, I have watched Doug Gross ably and amicably conduct PSO membership and board meetings, and I have read with admiration his presidential messages and Raven Reporter columns in this newsletter. Doug puts much thought into what he says and writes. Of course, he is dedicated to birds and birding like all who will read these lines, but he is better than most at articulating his passion and vision for birds and their conservation.

Doug has been an exemplary leader and example for Pennsylvania birders during his four years as president of PSO and going all the way back to the formation of this organization. I hope I can follow in his footsteps with some modest competence and to that end I invite your thoughts and comments on the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology.

For those who don't know me, I have lived in northern Huntingdon County and worked at Penn State since 1985, having graduated there in 1975. My wife Deb and I began birding in 1979 while in graduate school at Ohio State, outfitted with cheap binoculars and a trusty Peterson field guide that fit perfectly into the back pocket of my jeans. Why we first went birding, I don't really know or recall; but I've always thought the initial attraction for me of searching for birds was the similarity (in certain respects only!) to the hunting I have done since age 12.

I grew up in southern York County where my bird-related memories are of seeking Ring-necked Pheasants on crisp November days (in farm fields since converted to housing developments), of the bobwhites calling from all directions in the fields near my rural home, and finally of strange flocks of white birds I occasionally saw in cattle pastures.



Greg Grove was elected president at our recent PSO meeting at Montour Preserve.

Somehow I determined that these were Cattle Egrets, but I had no knowledge of the story of their recent, remarkable colonization of North America. Oddly, each of these three species is now largely missing from Pennsylvania, at least in the form of viable, self-sustaining populations.

About the recent PSO meeting at Montour Preserve – a success indeed and a good time for all by all accounts. The total of about 88 attendees was, I believe, above average. Details of the meeting are provided elsewhere in the

newsletter so I will keep my comments brief. Thanks must go first and foremost to those responsible for this successful gathering, notably Jon Beam (of Montour Preserve), Nancy Dennis, and Shonah Hunter. The many field trips offered were ably led by birders from several local organizations – the complete bird list is on page 8. I went on two pleasant and productive trips and would like to have done more.

We had informative afternoon talks by Bob Mulvihill on the PBBA (what else?!), Alan

Gregory on Pennsylvania butterflies (a first for a PSO meeting – and something to do with our pricey binoculars in the narrow window between BBA time and fall migration), and finally on the heroic efforts at creating County Natural Inventories by Rocky Gleason and Bud Sechler of the Nature Conservancy.

I'm sure all who heard banquet speaker Bill Evans will agree that he marvelously conveyed the wonders of nighttime migration flights and calls, showing us yet another incredible aspect of avian biology. I am inspired just thinking of those tiny birds earnestly pumping northward in the dark, keeping in touch with each other via their chips and chirps (but not literally in touch, which may be why they do chip and chirp!).

Congratulations to Dan Brauning who received the Earl Poole award for his many contributions to Pennsylvania ornithology. Most of you know of Dan's leading role in the first Breeding Bird Atlas, and in light of that achievement it is especially appropriate that Dan receive this award in 2004 as we begin the state's second BBA. Check page 12 for the complete list of PSO's current Board of Directors and officers, but note that during the Friday night business meeting, Rudy Keller was elected vice-president and Arlene Koch to the board.

I close with an invitation to mark your calendars for next May's annual meeting when we move west to Clarion, May 20-22. Our host will be the Seneca Rocks Audubon Society. I envision field trips to Cook Forest State Park, the grasslands of Clarion's reclaimed strip mines, and into Allegheny National Forest.

And if you have a 2006 calendar handy, you may want to note that we will probably meet at Powdermill Nature Reserve in Westmoreland County as they celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> year.

Good Birding and Good Atlasing! (should that be one "s" or two?)

– Greg Grove, President

## Annual Meeting Revisited Montour Preserve May 14-16, 2004

by Mark A. McConaughy

The 2004 PSO meeting was hosted by PPL's Montour Preserve. Jon Beam of PPL Montour Preserve and members of Lycoming Audubon, Seven Mountains Audubon, and the North Branch Bird Club should be commended for all their hard work organizing the fabulous meeting and field trips. The weather cooperated providing great mornings for birding.

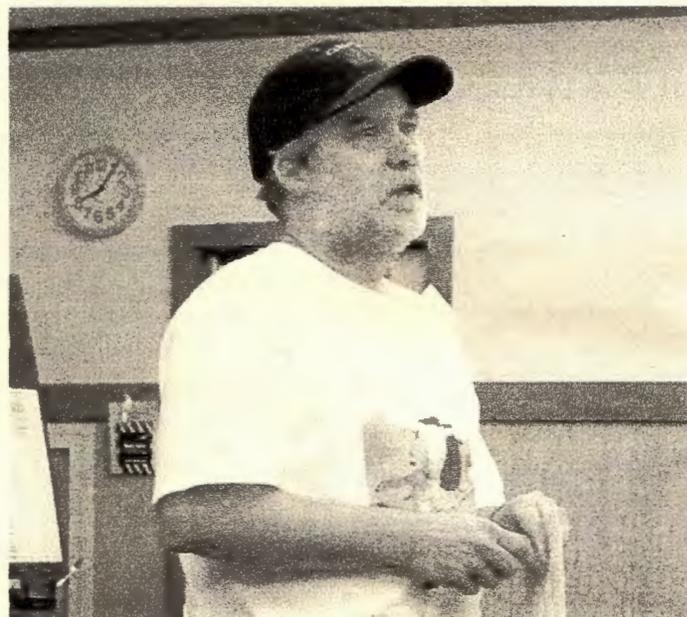
The scheduled Saturday field trips included Montour Preserve, led by Jon Beam; Montour and Northumberland Grasslands, led by Wayne Laubscher; Rose Valley and Rider Park, led by Joe Lipar; Ricketts Glen State Park and Ricketts Village, led by Doug Gross; Dale's Ridge Trail, led by Alan Schweinsburg; R.B. Winter State Park, led by Mark Larson; Susquehanna Riverlands, led by Nancy Dennis; and a canoe trip down the West Branch of the

Susquehanna River, led by Deuane Hoffman.

I signed up for the Saturday field trip to Ricketts Glen State Park, led by Doug Gross. Doug first led us through an old growth hemlock forest where Blue-headed Vireos, Red-eyed Vireos, Black-throated Green Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, American Redstarts, and Scarlet Tanagers flitted around in the canopy. Winter Wrens, Veeries, and Louisiana Waterthrushes were found along the creek in the narrow glen. After visiting the old growth forest, Doug guided us to an area that had been destroyed by a storm and now is brushy grassland. Least Flycatcher, Tree Swallows, Yellow Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats were encountered here.

The last location we visited on Saturday morning was the location of Ricketts village, a late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century village that is no longer standing. The area is now a wetlands and brushy area bounded by forest. We heard at least three and probably several more Alder Flycatchers singing in this area. One Alder Flycatcher posed on top of a bush. Nearby, a Swamp Sparrow sang from the top of another bush. An adult Broad-winged Hawk made a low, quick pass over the wetlands. Yellow Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats were calling in the underbrush and surrounding woods. The morning was a lot of fun!

Our outgoing PSO president, Doug Gross, introduced the Saturday afternoon programs. Doug has served ably as PSO president for the last four years. We are all grateful for Doug's hard work for the society.



Doug Gross, outgoing president, opens Friday evening's business meeting.

Robert Mulvihill presented a program about the Second Breeding Bird Atlas project. This five-year project that started this year will involve many members of the PSO and other volunteers who will survey the state looking for breeding birds. Every PSO member is encouraged to help with this project!

Alan Gregory presented an interesting program about Pennsylvania butterflies. Observing butterflies through binoculars is becoming an increasingly popular activity for birders, and Alan's presentation was well received.

The last Saturday afternoon presentation by Rocky Gleason and Bud Sechler addressed the Nature Conservancy's inventory of Montour County's natural resources (wildlife, including birds, plants, animals, etc.). They are looking for able birders to volunteer for these inventories in Montour County as well as in other counties throughout the state.

The local bird organizations provided various exhibits for the meeting. A feather identification contest proved to be a humbling experience for me. I correctly identified only three of 20 species! Vendors selling binoculars, spotting scopes, and a variety of birding related materials were also present.

Saturday evening's social and dinner were held at the Days Inn in Danville. After dinner Frank Haas compiled a list of the 140 bird species found during Saturday's outings. The final total for the weekend was 157 species.

Dan Brauning was then presented with the Poole Award for distinguished service to the Pennsylvania birding community. His work organizing and authoring the first Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas, coauthoring *The Birds of Pennsylvania* with Gerald McWilliams, and other work in the state made this a richly deserved award.

Bill Evans was introduced as the dinner speaker. As we were sitting in the darkened hotel holidome illuminated only by occasional flashes of lightning, he made an audio presentation of nocturnal flight calls of birds. The difficulties in identifying birds by chip notes quickly became apparent. Evans discussed how and why he became interested in figuring out these calls. It has taken him 15 years of work to match a majority of recorded nighttime calls with positively identified daytime calls of bird species. It was an appropriate end to the day.

Sunday morning arrived after a night of thunderstorms. We all hoped the storms had encouraged migrants to land or remain in the area until after our field trips were completed. Field trips were scheduled for Sunday morning to Montour Preserve, led by Jon Beam; Montour and

Northumberland Grasslands, led by Wayne Laubscher; Millville State Game Lands 226, led by Doug Gross; Pine Creek Valley, led by Joe Lipar; Allenwood State Game Lands, led by Mark Larson; Roaring Creek Watershed, led by Deuane Hoffman; Tall Timbers, led by Allen Schweinsberg; Susquehanna Riverlands, led by Nancy Dennis; and Nescopeck State Park, led by Alan Gregory.

I joined the trip to Pine Creek Valley, led by Joe Lipar, and had a great time. An Osprey and a Herring Gull were seen circling over the Susquehanna River in Williamsport as we were getting ready to start the field trip. Joe took us to the South Avis Flats to look at a field puddle. Birds seen in the field and surrounding area included Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, and Horned Lark. The rest of the field trip took us to various locations in Pine Creek Valley, and we ended with a nice list of bird species for the day. A total of 99 species were seen or heard during the trip, including 20 species of warblers. We viewed spectacular scenery in the Pine Creek Valley below the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania and saw a nice variety of wildflowers. There was something to please everyone during the outing.

Although the meeting ended on Sunday with the field trips, I would be remiss to end without mentioning the election that was held at the business meeting on Friday evening. Greg Grove was elected the new PSO president; Rudy Keller, vice president. I am sure Greg and Rudy will be great representatives of and advocates for the PSO. Carmen Santasania was reelected to the board, and Arlene Koch was also elected. All the membership is encouraged to support our officers and board of directors and to work on the Second Breeding Bird Atlas Project.

I am looking forward to next year's PSO meeting in Clarion, Pennsylvania. I hope everyone comes to Clarion and enjoys the field trips and presentations that will be provided in 2005.



Field trips are fun for all. Keep on looking up!

## Brauning Wins Poole Award

The PSO annual meeting has been the forum for announcing the winner of its Earl Poole Award for outstanding accomplishments to Pennsylvania ornithology since its inception in 1995. This year's winner, announced at the banquet on May 16 and appropriately timed to coincide with the initiation of the 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas Project, is Dan Brauning, Project Coordinator for the 1<sup>st</sup> Breeding Bird Atlas 20 years ago. Dan, who holds an MS degree in ecology from Penn State University, is presently Supervisor of the Wildlife Diversity Section of the Bureau of Wildlife Management, Pennsylvania Game Commission. He is a member of the Wilson Ornithological Society, our own PSO, the Ornithological Technical Committee (OTC) of the Pennsylvania Biological Survey, Partners In Flight Northeast Working Group, and The Nature Conservancy.

Dan has published two dozen articles in *Pennsylvania Game News*, *Pennsylvania Birds*, and *The Auk* since 1987. Most of these papers deal with the status of Pennsylvania's threatened/ endangered/ at risk species, some with population trends for Pennsylvania's nesting birds, and others with research techniques for monitoring grassland birds. In addition, he has edited or coauthored three books in his young career: *Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania*,

*The Birds of Pennsylvania* (with Gerry McWilliams), and the Chestnut-sided Warbler species account (with M. Richardson) of the *Birds of North America* series.

Dan played a major role in the restoration of Pennsylvania's super-raptors: Bald Eagle, Osprey, and Peregrine Falcon, and was the principal author of the recovery/ management plans for those species. He has designed and implemented numerous monitoring programs for Pennsylvania's protected and at-risk birds, including grassland birds, wetland birds, and birds of prey. He has worked with many partners to encourage bird conservation, including the Partners In Flight program.

He has served on the PSO board of directors and the OTC advisory board for many years. He recently chaired the important publisher/editor transition team for *Pennsylvania Birds* (transitioning from Frank and Barb Haas to Katrina Knight and then to Nick Pulcinella). He took on the seasonal editorship (summer) for *Pennsylvania Birds* in 2001 and continues that important task to date. He takes personal time to meet and socialize with birders around the state to promote bird interest and conservation. His bibliography follows.

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(continued on page 7)

# The Raven Reporter

## Tales of Discovery from the Special Areas Project



The PSO Special Areas Project is entering a new phase. With the start of the Second Breeding Bird Atlas, SAP field data collection is slowing down a bit to make room for this intensive short-term project. However, a lot is going on behind the scenes. We are switching our data to a new computer. SAP plans to draft checklists during the next year, starting with locations with many field trips.

We also are sharing SAP data with PA Audubon (IBA), the Bureau of State Parks, the Nature Conservancy, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and the PA Game Commission.

SAP still accepts data from contributors. We are especially interested in data collected in state parks without checklists and DCNR Natural/Wild Areas. SAP also eagerly accepts bird data from State Game Lands. With a little organization, volunteers can collect Atlas and SAP data simultaneously. Of course, SAP data can be collected in the non-breeding season to supplement the breeding season data.

### What Species Will Be Next?

The last Breeding Bird Atlas provided many surprises to the birding community. Who would have predicted that Black-necked Stilt, European Jackdaw, and Western Meadowlark would be found nesting in the state? The first Atlas also reestablished Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Dickcissel as breeding species. Since the Atlas period, a few more species have been added to the state's breeding list. These species include Sandhill Crane, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Blackpoll Warbler, and Clay-colored Sparrow. A few of these may nest in more locations than have been reported.

There are more possibilities that Pennsylvania birders should consider. A few species have been observed on territory (at least singing regularly) during the breeding season. There was a published report of a breeding

territory of Bay-breasted Warbler in Pennsylvania in 1993. Chris Haney and his associates documented a Bay-breasted Warbler on territory in Allegheny National Forest in a study of the old growth forest there. This observation was published in the *Journal of Field Ornithology* (J. C. Haney and R. R. Williams. 1994. Breeding Bird Census 77: Old Growth Beech-Hemlock Forest II. *Journal of Field Ornithology* Vol. 66: 82-83). They also noted a regularly singing Olive-sided Flycatcher in a forest opening.

There are other possibilities to consider. A few Ruby-crowned Kinglets have been observed in summer months. Only two years ago, Audubon field worker Chris Rebert had one in SGL 57 during an IBA survey. It was foraging in red spruces at a fairly high elevation (over 2,000 feet) in mid-June. Evening Grosbeaks have nested in the Dutch Mountain area as reported by Skip Conant, Dan Brauning, and me. The circumstances of this report should alert birders to the possibility that this invasive "winter finch" might adopt other high elevation locations near them. The Evening Grosbeaks were not way back in the deep woods, for the most part. Some of the grosbeaks were nesting in backyards of summer cottages near a lake. I also have heard singing Tennessee Warblers in mid-June. Perhaps one or a pair may stay long enough to breed. Merlins have been reported in more blocks in New York than anyone imagined for the present Atlas Project there. This species may be staging a range expansion that could include our own state.

It is important to keep your mind open about the possibilities of a wide variety of birds nesting in the state. Brush up on the identification of all the species, not just the ones that are regular near you. If you do find something unusual, it is important to follow through with repeated visits. Sometimes the stray bird becomes a resident if it finds what it likes in Pennsylvania.

### Transfer of Skills: Using Maps in SAPs and Atlas

The PSO Special Areas Project has not just been a bird inventory project. It has provided a training opportunity for the state's birders. Since its inception, SAP has utilized standard breeding codes for breeding behavior. This has allowed many birders to learn the codes before the Second Breeding Bird Atlas started.

Planning an "attack" on your Special Area bears some similarity to the way you should attack an Atlas block. Organizing your field trips to bird the maximum number of habitats should help you achieve full coverage. Spend a little time with a map of your SAP or your Atlas block before going afield. Your efforts will be more efficient and you will have more fun tallying species.

Topographic maps hold a great deal of useful information. Even the colors are helpful. The green areas designate wooded areas while the white shows openings. Larger woodlands are more likely to support area-sensitive species like Hairy Woodpecker. Streams and ponds are indicated by blue lines and splotches. Wetlands are designated symbolically. You can even differentiate between different kinds of wetlands by noting that some are colored green (wooded swampy wetlands) while others are white (usually emergent marshes or shrubby swamps). A combination of swamp, pond, and stream might reveal the best potential for Wood Ducks or Common Mergansers in your area. The combination of elevation and exposure can indicate the type of wetland. Each kind of wetland has its own bird community. Larger wetlands are more likely to support rare species like rails or bitterns. The higher elevation scrub wetland would be more likely to support Alder Flycatcher while the lower streamside meadow is more likely a good Willow Flycatcher spot. Where green meets white often indicates edge or ecotone habitat. Rights-of-way show as long white lines. That's where you might catch a Golden-winged or Chestnut-sided warbler. Contour lines indicate the slope and exposure. Densely clustered contour lines show a steep slope while far-spaced lines indicate a gentler slope. From these hints, you can pick out where the mountain slope forests may support Worm-eating Warblers and Scarlet Tanagers. Closely spaced contour lines along a stream may point out a hemlock hollow where Acadian Flycatchers, Blue-headed Vireos, and Magnolia Warblers reside. The north sides of slopes may support cooler microclimates more indicative of the northern hardwood and hemlock woods with a different set of birds than the south slopes. So, while the south-facing or creek bottom woodland will have lots of Wood Thrushes, the north or west side may support Hermit Thrushes.

So, whether you are conducting a SAP or participating in the Atlas, maps can be a powerful tool for successful planning.

#### Susquehanna River Birding and Wildlife Trail Guide

Congratulations to Pennsylvania Audubon for completing its new trail guide to birding and wildlife sites in the Susquehanna River drainage. This handy book provides information for more than 200 spots around central, eastern, and part of western Pennsylvania. It lists all kinds of sites from old growth forests to roadside rest stops. Many organizations and individuals contributed to the guide.

The Special Areas Project contributed a significant amount of information to the trail guide. I was given the opportunity to look at preliminary copies of the document. I commented extensively on an already-good draft. My

primary source of information was the Special Areas Project database with a rich set of information about the birds at many sites covered by the guide. For many sites, I could add several species of birds based on SAP surveys conducted over the years by several different people. Many sites were described by PSO (and Audubon) birders using their personal experiences to give authenticity to the bird lists and descriptions of the sites. Building a knowledge of the birds at each place contributes to many causes.

I also congratulate Pennsylvania Audubon on its inclusive attitude about bird projects. By cooperating we achieve much more. This is a terrific product that Marci Mowery and her staff produced. The trail guide is also the product of a considerable amount of cooperation between several government agencies, conservation groups, tourist organizations, and you, the birders of Pennsylvania. For more information about the guide, see the website, [www.pabirdingtrails.org](http://www.pabirdingtrails.org). We plan to contribute more information at the website. The guide and website will build more ecotourism and bird education in the state thanks to everyone who contributed.

#### Good-bye to Steve and Rob

For the last few years, PSO has been cooperating extensively with Pennsylvania Audubon. Steve Hoffman of PA Audubon and Dan Brauning of PA Game Commission started a series of Birding Workshops. They invited me along to represent PSO. It has been a fun ride for the last few years. We gave workshops across the state, often to crowded rooms, reaching out to dozens of birders. This has been a tremendous opportunity to educate birders on the techniques of bird identification, inventory, and monitoring. Our team deliberately attacked areas where we thought birders were weak and tried to build those skills most necessary for worthwhile inventory efforts. You cannot do a point count if you don't know bird songs. You cannot count raptors if you don't know how to differentiate the Accipiters. Everyone can brush up on flycatcher identification.

In the course of the workshops, Steve Hoffman enthusiastically taught birding skills and promoted PSO as well as his own organization, PA Audubon. He recognized from an early stage these organizations overlapped and complemented each other. Rob Blye joined in as soon as he became part of the team. Both joined the PSO board and recruited birders to our organization. I think we've made a great team. Pennsylvania birding benefited from our energetic good will.

Steve has left the state for a conservation position in Montana. PA Audubon and PSO will miss him. Rob has

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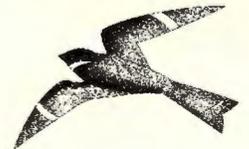
## Brauning Wins Poole Award (continued from page 4)

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## Meeting Participants



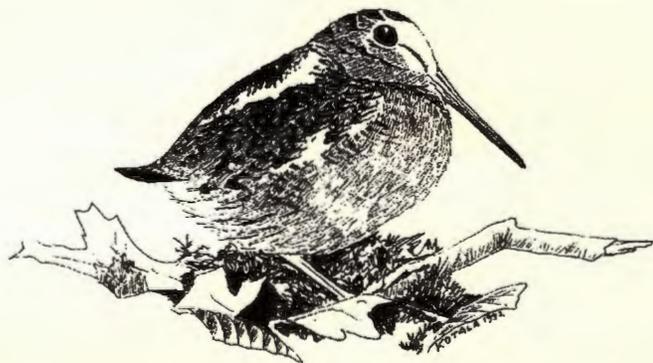
Helene Basile	Alan Gregory	Larry Jackson	Regina Reeder
Jon Beam	Debra Grim	Dory Jacobs	Carol Reigle
Carolyn Blatchley	Doug Gross	Rudy Keller	*Robert Reyda
Nick Bolgiano	Deb Grove	Nick Kerlin	*Michele Richards
Edward Bolstrum	Greg Grove	Nancy-Ellen Kiernam	Bob Ross
Sue Bolstrum	Carol Guba	Janet Kuehl	Allen Schweinsberg
*Pat Bontinen	Barb Haas	Tom Kuehl	Joanne Schweinsberg
Dan Brauning	Frank Haas	Sherri LaBar	Bud Sechler
*Beth Brobst	Maggie Harlan	Gloria Lamer	Jim Smith
*Don Brobst	Molly Heath	*Paula Davis-Larson	Rita Smith
*Lisa Cass	Len Hess	*Mark Larson	Dan Snell
*Mark Cohen	Linda Hess	Wayne Laubscher	Fred Stiner
Bob Cook	Margaret Higbee	Joe Lipar	Chris Turn
Bud Cook	Roger Higbee	Bill Malone	*Kristen Vitkauskas
Ruth Cook	Deuane Hoffman	Mark McConaughy	Linda Wagner
Glenn Czulada	Bob Houck	*Andrew McGann	Mary Walsh
Jim Dennis	Nancy Houck	Flo McGuire	Phil Walsh
Jane Earle	Jerry Howard	Jim McGuire	Larry Waltz
Bill Evans	Marjorie Howard	*Debby Meade	Don Watts
Kevin Fryberger	Shonah Hunter	Kathy Morelock	John Zalot
Trudy Gerlach	Bonnie Ingram	Bob Mulvihill	Mary Zalot
Rocky Gleason		*Steve Pokorny	Beth Zbegner

***\*We extend a warm welcome to these new members who joined for the PSO meeting!***

## Birds Listed at 2004 PSO Meeting

Canada Goose	Short-billed Dowitcher	Bank Swallow	Blackpoll Warbler
Wood Duck	Am. Woodcock	Cliff Swallow	Cerulean Warbler
Mallard	*Red-necked Phalarope	Barn Swallow	Black-and-white Warbler
Common Merganser	Ring-billed Gull	Black-capped Chickadee	American Redstart
Red-breasted Merganser	Herring Gull	Tufted Titmouse	Worm-eating Warbler
Ring-necked Pheasant	Rock Dove	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Ovenbird
Ruffed Grouse	Mourning Dove	White-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Waterthrush
Wild Turkey	Black-billed Cuckoo	Brown Creeper	Louisiana Waterthrush
Red-throated Loon	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Carolina Wren	Mourning Warbler
Common Loon	Common Nighthawk	House Wren	Common Yellowthroat
Horned Grebe	Chimney Swift	Winter Wren	Hooded Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Ruby-thrted Hummingbird	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Canada Warbler
Great Blue Heron	Belted Kingfisher	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Yellow-breasted Chat
Great Egret	Red-headed Woodpecker	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Scarlet Tanager
Green Heron	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Eastern Bluebird	Eastern Towhee
Black Vulture	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Veery	Chipping Sparrow
Turkey Vulture	Downy Woodpecker	Hermit Thrush	Field Sparrow
Osprey	Hairy Woodpecker	Wood Thrush	Vesper Sparrow
Mississippi Kite	Northern Flicker	American Robin	Savannah Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Pileated Woodpecker	Gray Catbird	Grasshopper Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Northern Mockingbird	Song Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Acadian Flycatcher	Brown Thrasher	Swamp Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk	Alder Flycatcher	European Starling	White-throated Sparrow
Red-shouldered Hawk	Willow Flycatcher	Cedar Waxwing	White-crowned Sparrow
Broad-winged Hawk	Least Flycatcher	Blue-winged Warbler	Dark-eyed Junco
Red-tailed Hawk	Eastern Phoebe	Golden-winged Warbler	Northern Cardinal
American Kestrel	Great Crested Flycatcher	Nashville Warbler	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Peregrine Falcon	Eastern Kingbird	Northern Parula	Indigo Bunting
Virginia Rail	White-eyed Vireo	Yellow Warbler	Bobolink
Sora	Yellow-throated Vireo	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Killdeer	Blue-headed Vireo	Magnolia Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Greater Yellowlegs	Warbling Vireo	Black-thrted Blue Warbler	Common Grackle
Lesser Yellowlegs	Red-eyed Vireo	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Solitary Sandpiper	Blue Jay	Black-thrted Green Warbler	Orchard Oriole
Spotted Sandpiper	American Crow	Blackburnian Warbler	Baltimore Oriole
Sanderling	Fish Crow	Yellow-throated Warbler	Purple Finch
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Common Raven	Pine Warbler	House Finch
Least Sandpiper	Horned Lark	Prairie Warbler	American Goldfinch
Dunlin	Tree Swallow	Bay-breasted Warbler	House Sparrow
	N. Rough-winged Swallow		

Total = 157 species



### The Raven Reporter *(continued from page 6)*

left Audubon to return to the private sector, but we hope he continues with us at PSO.

For more information about the Special Areas Project, contact:

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# Ornithological Literature Notes

(Note: This is the ninth in a series highlighting recent publications of special interest to Pennsylvania ornithologists and birders.)

Notable findings about Hooded Warbler biology continue to emerge from the Hemlock Hill Research Area, a privately owned 150-hectare forest surrounded by farmland in Crawford County. For more than a decade, it has been a nationally recognized location for studying this species. (For background, see our newsletter's February 2000 and September 2003 issues.)

In an investigation at Hemlock Hill reported this year, Paul A. Callo sought to learn whether using models of predators — in this case, models of Blue Jays — to study Hooded Warbler nest defense caused a decrease in nesting success. For example, might real predators “cue” on the parents’ behavior with the artificial predators and subsequently prey upon those nests? Might the presence of model predators cause parents to decrease feeding their nestlings and thus decrease nestling survival? Callo’s analysis, which was published in the *Journal of Field Ornithology* (75:200-202), showed no ill effects on the eventual fledging rate.

Callo compared the fledging success rate in 1999 at nests where he used model Blue Jays and the rate at nests during 1995-1998 when no predator models were used. The proportion of nests that fledged young in 1999 did not differ from the proportion in any of the previous four years. The adults did make fewer feeding trips to the nests when the model predator was nearby, but evidently the fewer feedings had no adverse effects on the nestlings. Callo also found no decrease in fledging rate because of predator attraction; predators were rarely drawn to the artificial models.

He concluded that predator models can be used to study Hooded Warbler nest defense without compromising nesting success, and he noted that his results were consistent with findings by other researchers who used models of predatory gulls at Tree Swallow nests.

— Paul D. Hess



# NABS 2004 at Ithaca

The 2004 convention of the North American Bluebird Society will be held July 7-11 at Ithaca, New York. The 27th annual convention is truly international – registrations are arriving daily from three dozen states and provinces. Come and learn how the wonderful summers offset the long winters in central New York. The welcome mat is out.



Registration will be limited to 350. Add to the fun by bringing a donation for the silent auction.

The Clarion University Hotel and Conference Center offers the amenities of a busy college town. Within minutes of a variety of restaurants and varied shopping opportunities, museums, parks and summer recreation, the convention venue offers something for everyone.

The foremost attraction may be the new Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology at Sapsucker Woods, just a couple miles from the convention hotel. The startling, new thirty million-dollar headquarters will bring all of us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of ornithology. Its library with study carrels, the view over Sapsucker Woods pond, its interactive exhibits, and the world famous collection of natural sounds, are just the beginning of the pleasure that awaits visitors to this biological Mecca.

Pat Gowaty, a favorite among bluebird enthusiasts, will kick off Saturday’s program at the NABS Convention. Early in her professional career, Pat chose bluebirds as the subjects for research to better understand the social behavior of a species. She admits, “I was naive when I began 30 years ago. I didn’t realize how easy it was going to be to study them. I discovered that bluebirds spontaneously generate at the site of nest boxes! If I put nest boxes in places that I thought the birds would like, I had tons of birds. These birds turned out to be extraordinarily easy to study.” She believes bluebirds to be a model species for behavioral studies. Research funding from National Institutes of Health (NIH) has continued for many years. Such funding is awarded on the basis of “the applicability of the research to human health concerns.” She continues, “I have watched bluebirds because they are extraordinarily aesthetically pleasing. I study an organism that pleases me every day. I really like bluebirds.”

Field trips include such popular destinations as Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, the Corning Museum of Glass, the Frederick Remington Museum of Western Culture, Finger Lakes National Forest, National Warplane Museum, and the Finger Lakes Wine Region. In addition, information for self-guided trips to Cooperstown - Baseball Hall of Fame and Farmers Museum, to Lake Ontario, and the Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River, Adirondack lakes and parks, and many other vacation venues will be available.

The banquet speaker, Dr. Charles R. Smith, an authority on grassland birds, was once a student of Lawrence Zeleny. He is based in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University and will speak about the conservation of farmland birds. Since 1992, Dr. Smith has coordinated the New York State Gap Analysis Project, in cooperation with multiple state and federal agencies. His research focuses upon biodiversity conservation and questions related to conservation of grassland birds and responses of northeastern breeding bird populations to habitat change and fragmentation.

Other speakers include Keith Kridler from Texas; John Rogers, central New York naturalist and popular speaker; and Kevin McGowan, a prominent researcher who revealed

the family life of the American Crow. Ray Briggs, founder and first president of the Schoharie County NY Bluebird Society, retired Vo-Ag teacher, and cattle judge, will tickle your funny bone with his nestbox monitoring slide show. Entertainment will be provided by The Fly Creek Philharmonic, a group made famous on the radio classic, *A Prairie Home Companion*.

For more information about the July NABS convention, go to the NYSBS website at <http://www.nysbs.com>, read the NABS *Bluebird*, or contact David Smith by phone at 607-844-9167 or email at [klip@clarityconnect.com](mailto:klip@clarityconnect.com).

## Conservation Corner

For anyone out there in PSO land who isn't aware of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas, please take the time to check it out. The current website is really "cool" and there is a "ton" of information about the Atlas and how to participate. The website is <http://bird.atlasing.org/PA>. If you don't have access to the internet, check with a friend who does, or visit your local public library for access.

For those who already know about the Atlas and haven't signed up for blocks, I would encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Again, go to the website and register for blocks and find out who your regional coordinator is.

And for those birders who think that because their skills aren't on a par with a Kenn Kaufman or a Pete Dunn so they can't contribute, please reconsider. After attending a meeting with the Atlas Project directors, Bob Mulvihill and Mike Lanzone, I believe there is a place for everyone who is interested in and watches birds. This is a great project, and will be a lot of fun for everyone who participates.

The end result of this five-year project will be a great deal of information about the breeding birds in Pennsylvania, where they breed, and how common/rare they are. This information in turn can be used to help prepare land use plans, assist in preparing strategies to help threatened/endangered species and to help guide public land agencies in their planning efforts. And hopefully, with this improved land use planning, critical bird/wildlife habitat will be conserved and/or restored which in turn will benefit the birds and birders.

So, if you aren't familiar with the Atlas Project, please go to the website and read about it and then volunteer to participate. And, if you know about the project but haven't signed up to participate, please do so. It's a great opportunity to go birding while helping birds at the same time.

– Mark Henry, Conservation Chairperson

## Bird Quiz

How well do you know your Pennsylvania birds?

1. Which rare visitor to Pennsylvania is known for a large plate projecting upward from its bill in the breeding season?
2. Quick! Don't look at a field guide: What color are a Mourning Dove's legs and feet?
3. What kind of bird has long been known by Pennsylvania Germans in Berks County as "die Schnepf" or "die Wasserschnepf"?
4. Referring to southern Fayette County, a species account in our first breeding atlas said, "It seems likely that within this limited geographic area of the state [it] will one day become a full-fledged Pennsylvania breeding bird." Which species?
5. Which Pennsylvania breeding bird is famous as the only species ever reported on the Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, Christmas Bird Count?

(See Answers on page 12.)

# PSO Annual Treasurer's Report

5/1/2003 to 4/30/2004

	Income	Expenses
<b>Administrative</b>		
Awards	\$0.00	(\$208.25)
Bank Fees	\$0.00	(\$55.78)
Legal/Professional Services	\$0.00	(\$120.00)
Office Supplies	\$0.00	(\$92.50)
Postage	\$0.00	(\$421.15)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$897.68)</b>
<b>Annual Meeting</b>		
PSO Meeting	\$4,244.50	(\$2,929.49)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$4,244.50</b>	<b>(\$2,929.49)</b>
<b>Contributions</b>		
Contribution - PSO	\$775.50	\$0.00
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$775.50</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Dues</b>		
New Memberships	\$1025.50	\$0.00
Renewals	\$14,537.50	\$0.00
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$15,563.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>		
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	(\$10.00)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$10.00)</b>
<b>Newsletter</b>		
Newsletter Postage	\$0.00	(\$314.97)
Newsletter Printing	\$0.00	(\$1,962.17)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$2,277.14)</b>
<b>Pennsylvania Birds</b>		
Advertising	\$50.00	\$0.00
Pa Birds Expenses	\$0.00	(\$1,185.62)
Pa Birds Postage	\$0.00	(\$525.72)
Pa Birds Printing	\$0.00	(\$15,809.10)
Renewal PB Foreign	\$45.00	\$0.00
Renewal PB US	\$620.00	\$0.00
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$715.00</b>	<b>(\$17,520.44)</b>
<b>Sales</b>		
Binder w/30 Checklists	\$57.50	\$0.00
Binders	\$10.00	\$0.00
Checklists	\$336.50	\$0.00
Former Issues	\$476.00	\$0.00
PSO Pins	\$15.00	\$0.00
Refund	\$0.00	(\$25.00)
T-Shirts	\$611.49	(\$1009.50)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$1,506.49</b>	<b>(\$1,034.50)</b>
<b>Special Areas Project</b>		
SAP Expenses	\$0.00	(\$174.24)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$174.24)</b>
<b>Taxes</b>		
Tax Payments	\$0.00	(\$20.91)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$20.91)</b>
<b>Web Site</b>		
Web Site	\$0.00	(\$161.46)
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$161.46)</b>
	<b>\$22,804.49</b>	<b>(\$25,025.86)</b>
	<b>Net Gain/(loss):</b>	<b>(\$2,221.37)</b>
	Bank balance as of 4/30/2003	\$25,533.59
	Total Deposits	\$22,804.49
	Total Withdrawals	(\$25,025.86)
	Bank balance as of 4/30/2004	\$23,312.22

Respectfully submitted — May 14, 2004 — Franklin C. Haas, Treasurer

## Answers to Bird Quiz

1. American White Pelican
2. Pinkish
3. A snipe, or more generally a shorebird.
4. Swainson's Warbler
5. Common Raven



One person submitted the correct answer (actually, half of a correct answer) to the bonus question in the last issue: *Which species behaves like the name of a great American League pitcher?* The pitcher was Catfish Hunter. The bird was Double-crested Cormorant.

Eric Marchbein of Pittsburgh named the pitcher correctly. He listed several species that might be considered catfish hunters, but he did not include the cormorant, which is best known for this behavior at catfish farms in the southern USA.



## PSO Newsletter

This newsletter is published four times a year by the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology.

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