From the President’s Desk....

I’m writing this message on a dreary mid-November day, and looking out the office window, I’m a bit taken aback at the speed with which the landscape went from colorful and beautiful to brown and unattractive. Did I not notice it happening or did it happen overnight? The long cold winter, which I admit to disliking, is settling in, but I know that I’d be bored to tears living in a place where the seasons never changed. By the end of January, though, I long for the sight and smell of flowers and foliage.

We birders, though, seem to take the winter doldrums better than others because there’s always something to do or look forward to. My husband David jokingly tells our nonbirding friends that birders never have an off season and he’s right.

The Christmas Bird Counts, the oldest, best organized, and most well known of the data collection efforts, are right around the corner. But they don’t stand alone. Some bird clubs do mid-winter count days, the eBird computer site accepts data on a daily basis, and former president Greg Grove conducts a statewide PA Winter Raptor Survey that’s producing great results. And if none of that suits your fancy, you can always do your own personal Big Day and submit the data as far up as the national American Birding Association.

Birding goes hand in hand with Mother Nature. She never takes a day off and, more importantly, neither does she discriminate as to who discovers or reveals her secrets. Anyone, regardless of origin, profession, age, or sex, can be a birder. At our recent fall Board of Directors’ meeting at Duffy’s in Boalsburg I thought about this as I looked at the people around the table. Birding has no resume requirements except a thirst for knowledge, the need to do something, and great curiosity. Some would say that people become birders to change the world and make it a better place, but I personally think that if and when that happens it only does so with birding maturity.

A myriad of topics was discussed at the meeting, one of which will remain at the forefront of controversial conservation topics for the foreseeable future. Energy generation from an ever-increasing number of wind farms has many conservationists drawing a line in the sand. There are viable opinions, both pro and con, on both sides of this issue.

Although November signals the beginning of “the ugly season,” it is also a month when many vagrant species show up in the state. Ash-throated Flycatchers, Western Kingbirds, and Rufous Hummingbirds come to mind, all species I never thought I’d see in this state when I first picked up binoculars. So many Rufous Hummingbirds have now been documented in the state that we no longer have to submit the records to the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee (PORC).

It may be November, but my thoughts now frequently turn to the 2009 annual meeting that will be held in Bucks County in the southeastern part of the state May 15–17. Details will follow in the next newsletter, but be sure to put the dates on your calendar now because this will be another good one!

Arlene Koch, President
Easton, PA
Northampton County
Each year, Pennsylvania participates in a nationwide winter survey of eagles. The 2009 Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey will be held from Wednesday, 31 December 2008, to Wednesday, 14 January 2009, with target dates of 9 and 10 January.

The 2008 winter eagle survey was quite successful thanks to an outstanding team of eagle-watchers and the cooperation of the Army Corps of Engineers which covered several impoundments. Special thanks go to Chotty Sprenkle who heads up the Lower Susquehanna Eagle Team. They even have team hats! And, also to PGC’s own Jerry Bish who leads the PGC team in the Crawford County surveys. Kudos also go to the Eagle Institute that helps out in the Upper Delaware River region where so many eagles spend the winter.

The 2008 winter eagle survey yielded recorded 183 eagles, including 101 adults and 83 immature or of unknown age. More than 114 hours of field survey effort were contributed to the survey. New surveys were started along the Juniata River (Perry County), because of the growing eagle population there, an extension of the Chesapeake Bay/Lower Susquehanna River population. And, we added Curwensville Lake to the list. These large reservoirs seem to be increasing in their relative importance to the winter eagle population, perhaps because of the stability of their water conditions.

The 2008 winter eagle survey was more than a seasonal tally of eagles in our state. It gives us an early start on finding new or alternate eagle nests because pairs often are building new nests or repairing old ones at that time. With the increased eagle population, there is an increased chance that some eagles are forming roosts. We would like to identify these roosts so we can better protect them.

Despite increased interest in Golden Eagles, none were reported in the 2008 survey. Perhaps we can do better in the future, identifying wintering areas of Goldens in the state.

Failed attempts to recruit cooperators in some south-eastern counties resulted in fewer survey hours and fewer eagles counted in that region. This affected the total results, but the total count of eagles was still greater than the previous year’s effort. We also could increase our coverage of non-agency property in the northwest and southwestern counties.

Although there is good coverage of the state, we could use some help in the following areas for the 2009 survey:

- Roderick Reserve, SGL 314
- Presque Isle State Park/Presque Isle Bay
- Lake Erie Shore points including Elk Creek access and Erie Bluffs State Park
- Tamarack Lake
- Cheat River Lake
- Youghiogheny River Lake
- West Branch Susquehanna upstream of Lewisburg (not including Curwensville Lake)
- Long Arm and Shepperd Myers Reservoirs
- Lake Marburg
- Lake Williams/Lake Redmond
- Schuylkill River
- Brandywine Creek
- Lower Delaware River – Philadelphia
- Lower Delaware River, Bucks County, and Van Skiver Lake area

Please let me know if you would like to help out. This project is a great way to get out in the winter and to involve new birders in a bird project. Eagles are fairly easy to identify.

Mark Your Calendars for the Rusty Blackbird Winter Blitz

The Rusty Blackbird has been steeply declining with estimates of an 85-99% population drop over the past 40 years. The cause for this alarming decline is not known, and the increasingly sparse and patchy winter distribution of the Rusty Blackbird is making it more difficult to learn more about distribution, abundance, and ecology as a basis for conservation efforts. Collaborating with Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's and National Audubon Society's e-Bird project, the PA Game Commission and the Rusty Blackbird Technical Working Group (RBTWG) needs your help to find local, but predictable, wintering concentrations of Rusty Blackbirds by participating in the Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz.

The Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz will occur, February 7-15, 2009, throughout the Rusty Blackbird winter range in more than 20 midwestern and southeastern states. Pennsylvania is at the northern edge of the Rusty
Blackbird’s wintering range, so our data will give an interesting perspective to this project.

Participants are asked to visit locations where they have previously sighted or would expect to encounter Rusty Blackbirds and submit their observations via e-Bird. There are no data sheets or daily time restrictions. You can go wherever you like, whenever you like, and as often as you like anytime between the dates of **February 7-15, 2009**. We are simply seeking observations on the number of birds present at each location visited, along with very basic habitat information.

If you are unfamiliar with areas which may support Rusty Blackbirds in your region, contact the Blitz coordinator for ideas (that’s Doug Gross in Pennsylvania). You might want to follow through with the Christmas Count discoveries found earlier in the winter. Rusty Blackbirds are found in a few Pennsylvania CBC circles each year. Also, there are a variety of wetlands, especially in northwestern Pennsylvania, where Rusties are known to visit, often in sheltered parts of the wetland. Rusty Blackbirds often forage for acorns and wild berries in wetlands. They also flick through the muddy edges of shorelines with their long bills, tossing leaves and other bits of vegetation as they go. They will often roost in trees near or perhaps within a few miles of the wetlands where they forage.

Rusties also keep moving around in winter and may be found in a “completely different place” in mid- or late winter than in early winter when we do our Christmas Counts. So, it is good to look in a variety of places including those you do not normally haunt. Who knows what you might find?

Of course, it almost goes without saying that Christmas Bird Count data concerning Rusty Blackbirds would be very welcome. The males even sing in winter, so they are a very intriguing icterid!

Pennsylvania efforts on behalf of Rusty Blackbirds have an extra bonus. One of our really outstanding young field ornithologists, Andrew McGann, is researching wintering Rusty Blackbirds as his Master’s Degree project at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Please look for his posts on the Pennsylvania Birds list serve concerning Rusty Blackbirds and his research. I look forward to them.

As a result of these efforts, the RBTWG is hoping to create maps of wintering Rusty Blackbird “hot spots” that will help direct research, monitoring, and conservation attention.

If you don’t use eBird regularly, please consider entering all your observations of Rusty Blackbirds (even outside the Blitz period). Your observations will be used by researchers currently studying their steep long-term population decline.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission encourages participation in this event. The Rusty Blackbird is a high priority species in the national Partners in Flight land bird conservation plan and a Watch List species. Please feel free to contact Doug Gross at the addresses listed below if you are interested in participating. If you do not have access to the internet, we would be glad to receive your reports in another manner.

Additional instructions and information on identification, habitat preferences, etc., will soon be posted on the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center's Rusty Blackbird website:

http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Research/Rusty_Blackbird/

Information and instructions will also be available on Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's eBird site:

http://ebird.org and the Pennsylvania portal for eBird will also have more information about the Blitz as we get closer to the event. It is found at:

www.ebird.org/content/pa

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In early October I was sitting in my living room waking up with a morning cup of coffee when I saw a flock of birds drop into the trees along the road out front. The trees in this small stand average only about 20 feet tall and include a few ash trees, several sassafras trees, a silver maple, a hackberry, and one or two small red oaks. The leaves were still present on all of them so the birds temporarily disappeared, but I suspected they were Cedar Waxwings that put down to feed on the sweet hackberries. My binoculars confirmed my suspicions and, in addition to the waxwings, with them were some robins, Purple and House Finches, and a Northern Mockingbird.

By the end of the month all of the leaves on these trees were gone and so were all the hackberries. But then a heavy set of the winged seeds of the silver maple became visible. And then the waxwings and other species began feasting on these maple seeds. There are other hackberry and maple trees on the property, so during this time if I wanted to see waxwings or Purple Finches I looked for these trees and usually found them.

So what’s so unusual about this, you ask? Well, nothing really, but the point of this article is to urge birders to get to know trees. Had I not known a hackberry from a sassafras, I may not have seen as many Cedar Waxwings and Purple Finches as I did. And I owe whatever knowledge I have of different kinds of tree to a visit many years ago from a now deceased biology professor named Betsy Burkhart.

Betsy was a “birdwatcher” for 60 years. By the time she came here, she no longer walked well, so I drove her around the fields and then we sat on the deck talking and watching the feeders. Something she said to me that day made a great difference in how I approached birding and still comes to mind every time I point out a bird in a tree to other birders or visitors. “My dear,” she said, “you’re never going to be an accomplished birdwatcher if you don’t learn your trees.”

I remember being taken aback by this statement because at the time I thought I already was a pretty good “birdwatcher.” I owned as many bird guides as I could afford and had even sprung for some bird tapes. But shortly after her visit I realized how right she was. It was spring migration and I went looking for warblers at a time when I wasn’t all that proficient at finding some of the more unusual ones. In a nearby park I ran into another birder and together we began checking a stand of evergreens. Suddenly he called out that there was a Bay-breasted Warbler at 9 o’clock in the spruce tree, but I never found the bird. The reason I never found the bird was that I was looking into a fir tree, not the spruce with the bird in it.

Accomplished birders don’t get to be that way on their knowledge of birds alone. Those that stand above the crowd are the ones who learn as much as they can about everything in their environment. And while that may sound like a daunting task, it doesn’t have to be. Start with your own back yard, learn the trees there, and then move on to bigger areas.

You will probably never get to where you can identify every tree at every season of the year. When stripped of their leaves deciduous trees can be extremely difficult to identify. But Dr. Burkhart told me to learn trees by picking the aspect of a tree that I’m the most comfortable with, be that the bark, leaves, flowers, fruit, height, color, or shape. Everyone, she said, learns trees from a different angle. And she was again, of course, correct. I don’t know if I ever thanked her properly, but I hope I did. So before you add another bird guide to your library, consider adding a tree guide instead. And then, after you learn your trees, try your hand at shrubs.

**PSO Quiz**

How well do you know your Pennsylvania birds?

1. Six species that were confirmed as breeders in our first breeding bird atlas will have different English names in our second atlas. Which species?

2. Which bird on the Pennsylvania list breeds nearest to the South Pole?

3. In *A Field Guide to Warblers of North America*, Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett describe one species this way: “After the Palm Warbler and the waterthrushes, the ____ is more of a tail bobber than any other warbler.” Which warbler is this?

4. An Old World lark was collected at Glenolden in 1928, but is not included on the state list despite the specimen record. Which species, and why did Earl Poole consign it to the supplementary list in his book *Pennsylvania Birds*?

5. Which of our owls is more likely than others to be found in wet forests?

(See Answers on page 12.)
Top National Ornithological Groups Meet in Pittsburgh in '09

The 2009 joint scientific meeting of The Wilson Ornithological Society and the Association of Field Ornithologists, will be held 09-12 April 2009 in Pittsburgh, hosted by the National Aviary and Powdermill Nature Reserve and many Pennsylvania organizational partners. Todd Katzner, Ph.D., the aviary's Director of Conservation and Field Research, chairs the Local Organizing Committee. Todd spoke to PSO members at our last annual meeting.

Todd said to be sure "to let PSO folks know that people who volunteer to work the meeting get free admission to the conference. We can't provide free banquet food, but admission to other events (with snacks, etc.) will be available. This will be a collection of some of the world's leading ornithologists."

"These meetings are also really good because they draw in lots of students," Todd continued. "I personally find that a really positive thing – larger meetings sometimes block out students and this one will be attractive to them. There will be a student presentation award, given to the best student presenter."

The Association of Field Ornithologists (AFO) is one of the world's major societies of professional and amateur ornithologists dedicated to the scientific study and dissemination of information about birds in their natural habitats. Founded in 1922, AFO emphasizes bird banding, field techniques, and conservation biology and publishes the Journal of Field Ornithology.

The Wilson Ornithological Society (WOS) founded in 1888 and named in honor of Alexander Wilson, is a worldwide organization of nearly 2500. It is one of the leading scholarly organizations of professional ornithologists, publishes the prestigious Wilson Journal of Ornithology, and holds annual meetings.

The meeting's Call for Papers invites members of the societies and guests to contribute by presenting an oral paper or poster on any aspect of avian biology. Of interest to us in Pennsylvania (and as mentioned in the last PSO Pileated) Kenneth C. Parkes, former curator of the Section of Birds at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, will receive a posthumous William and Nancy Klamm Service Award at the meeting.

Information about the joint conference is being posted, as it becomes available, at <http://www.wosafo2009.org/jointConf.php> and details about AFO and WOS are on their web sites <http://www.wilsonsociety.org/>.

Anyone willing to help with local arrangements for the meeting should contact PSO board member Jack Solomon <snaggle719@yahoo.com>.

Time for Award Nominations

As we think ahead to the 2009 Annual Meeting it is once again time to consider nominees for PSO’s Earl L. Poole Award and the Conservation Award. The deadline for nominations is February 1, 2009. Nominations may be submitted at any time. The awards committee is chaired by the PSO vice-president. The committee will submit their recommendations for award winners to the board at their February 2009 meeting. Award winners will be notified well in advance of the annual meeting so that they have an opportunity to plan to attend. This also enables them to arrange for family and friends to share in the thrill of being recognized by the Pennsylvania birding community.

The Earl L. Poole award is presented annually to a person or persons who have made significant contributions to Pennsylvania’s ornithology. This may be in the form of volunteer efforts, publications, field work, or any other pursuit that has furthered the knowledge, documentation, sharing, and or interest in birdlife in Pennsylvania. The professional as well as the amateur is equally deserving of consideration. The Conservation Award is presented to an individual or organization that has had a positive impact on bird conservation in Pennsylvania. And yes, there may be some overlap, so don’t let that get in the way of nominating an individual or organization deserving of recognition. See the PSO website for a list of past winners.

With so many contributing to birding in Pennsylvania, give the committee a tough job this year. A short letter or email is all it takes to submit a nomination. Nominations should be submitted to me either by email or by regular mail.

– Tom Kuehl, Vice President

Tom Kuehl
3615 Hilty Road
Export PA 15632.
tjkuehl@comcast.net
If you see a Canada Goose wearing a yellow collar and/or a yellow leg ring in Pennsylvania, Tony Fox in Denmark would like to know. It would be one of 123 geese color-ringed on the tundra of West Greenland in July 2008 as part of a long-term research project coordinated from Denmark’s National Environmental Research Institute.

Adults have large coded neck collars and, usually, similarly coded leg rings. Young of the year have only leg rings. The codes consist of capital letters or a combination of letters and numbers, all starting with “G.” Fox requests that observers provide as much information as possible, including:

* Whether the goose was observed alive or recovered after being shot.
* Date and location where found (a particular farm or wetland, the nearest town, the county, and the state, with latitude and longitude if known).
* Whether it was associating with other marked or unmarked geese, and an estimate of the flock size.
* Observer’s name and e-mail or postal address.
* Any other details such as the habitat or food being used by the goose.

“We would be especially grateful for any resightings of these birds, or reports of shot birds. All such reports are highly valued and all will be fully acknowledged,” Fox says. Send them to him at tfo@dmu.dk.

Canada Geese marked in Greenland in the mid-1990s have been found migrating through Labrador and New Brunswick and overwintering in Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. Of the birds marked in 2008, Fox reports that as of November 1, five were sighted in northern Maine and four were shot in New Brunswick, all during October.

The project is designed to study interactions between Canada and Greater White-fronted Geese. In west Greenland, Canada Geese (interior subspecies) have been increasing and Greater White-fronted Geese (flavirostris subspecies) have been declining significantly in recent years. “The population decline occurred at the same time that Canada Geese were increasing in numbers, and it has been suggested that competition between the two geese may be limiting the potential of Greenland Whitefronts to breed,” according to Fox.

A website for the project includes details about past sightings of marked Canadas and links to interesting research publications about the decline of Greater Whitefronts: http://greenland08.wikispaces.com/Request+for+resightings+of+Canada+Geese

– Paul Hess
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<td><a href="mailto:bcoriole@alltel.net">bcoriole@alltel.net</a></td>
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<td>Location</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Johnstown</td>
<td>Cambria</td>
<td>Sally and Tom Dick</td>
<td>814-266-7912</td>
<td><a href="mailto:thomasd102@aol.com">thomasd102@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Lake Raystown</td>
<td>Huntingdon</td>
<td>Greg Grove</td>
<td>814-667-2305</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gw2@psu.edu">gw2@psu.edu</a></td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
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<td>Chris Pederson</td>
<td>717-295-2607</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pederson@epix.net">pederson@epix.net</a></td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>Fritz Heilman</td>
<td>717-273-0487</td>
<td><a href="mailto:volks5@verizon.net">volks5@verizon.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Lehigh Valley</td>
<td>Lehigh/Berks</td>
<td>Mark Boyd</td>
<td>610-432-0170</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mbboyd@rcn.com">mbboyd@rcn.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Lewisburg</td>
<td>Union, Snyder, Northumberland</td>
<td>Allen Schweinsberg</td>
<td>570-524-0432</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aschwein@bucknell.edu">aschwein@bucknell.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Lewistown</td>
<td>Juniata</td>
<td>Elmer Petersheim, Chad Kauffman</td>
<td>717-463-3625, 717-994-6715</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chadkauffman@earthlink.net">chadkauffman@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Linesville</td>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>Clare Nicolls</td>
<td>814-587-6395</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tnicolls@alltel.net">tnicolls@alltel.net</a></td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>Lititz</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>Bruce Carl</td>
<td>717-859-4179</td>
<td><a href="mailto:carls@dejazzd.com">carls@dejazzd.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Lock Haven-Jersey Shore</td>
<td>Clinton, Lycoming</td>
<td>Wayne Laubscher</td>
<td>570-748-7511</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wlaubsch@kcnet.org">wlaubsch@kcnet.org</a></td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Tioga</td>
<td>Gary Tyson</td>
<td>570-724-5789</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gnats3@ptd.net">gnats3@ptd.net</a></td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>New Bloomfield</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Ramsay Koury</td>
<td>717-761-1871</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rkoury123@aol.com">rkoury123@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>Newville</td>
<td>Cumberland</td>
<td>Bill and Linda Franz</td>
<td>717-776-4463</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Northern Lycoming</td>
<td>Lycoming</td>
<td>Dave Ferry</td>
<td>570-323-1590</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dferry@wasd.org">dferry@wasd.org</a></td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>Pennypack Valley</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Peter Kurtz</td>
<td>215-342-3638, 215-685-0470</td>
<td><a href="mailto:peter.kurtz@phila.gov">peter.kurtz@phila.gov</a></td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Philipsburg</td>
<td>Centre Clearfield</td>
<td>Greg Kojadinovich</td>
<td>814-237-5964</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ninthstreet1@yahoo.com">ninthstreet1@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Allegheny</td>
<td>Jim Valimont</td>
<td>412-828-5338</td>
<td><a href="mailto:valimont49@comcast.net">valimont49@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>Pittsburgh South Hills</td>
<td>Allegheny, Washington</td>
<td>Nancy Page</td>
<td>412-221-4795</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>Pleasantville</td>
<td>Venango</td>
<td>Russ States</td>
<td>814-676-6320</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pabirder@verizon.net">pabirder@verizon.net</a></td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>Pocono Mt.</td>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>Brian Hardiman</td>
<td>814-274-8946</td>
<td><a href="mailto:haubers3@penn.com">haubers3@penn.com</a></td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Potter County</td>
<td>Potter</td>
<td>Dave Hauber</td>
<td>814-274-8946</td>
<td><a href="mailto:haubers3@penn.com">haubers3@penn.com</a></td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Berks</td>
<td>Ken Lebo</td>
<td>610-856-1413</td>
<td><a href="mailto:klebo@dejazzd.com">klebo@dejazzd.com</a></td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Rector</td>
<td>Westmoreland</td>
<td>Len and Linda Hess</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:lnhess@lhtot.com">lnhess@lhtot.com</a></td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>Ryerson</td>
<td>Greene</td>
<td>Marjorie Howard</td>
<td>724-852-3155</td>
<td><a href="mailto:birdwatcher@alltel.net">birdwatcher@alltel.net</a></td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>Scranton</td>
<td>Lackawanna</td>
<td>Paul Mundy</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Pnraptors@aol.com">Pnraptors@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>Southeastern Bradford</td>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>Trudy Gerlach</td>
<td>570-746-9270</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tgswoods@epix.net">tgswoods@epix.net</a></td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Southern Bucks</td>
<td>Bucks</td>
<td>Robert Mercer</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:rmercer@co.bucks.pa.us">rmercer@co.bucks.pa.us</a></td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Southern Lancaster County</td>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>Bob Schutsky</td>
<td>717-548-3303 (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@birdtreks.com">info@birdtreks.com</a></td>
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<td>58</td>
<td>State College</td>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Jim Dunn, Bob Fowles</td>
<td>814-863-8625, 814-238-1990</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jwd6@psu.edu">jwd6@psu.edu</a>, <a href="mailto:rbf@psu.edu">rbf@psu.edu</a></td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>Thompson</td>
<td>Susquehanna</td>
<td>Stuart Slocum</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>Tunkhannock</td>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>Rick Koval</td>
<td>570-829-4381, 570-696-1691 (w)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:koval@nblt.org">koval@nblt.org</a></td>
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Conservation Corner

For this edition of Conservation Corner I decided to “cheat a little” and publish John Flicker’s statement following the election of President-elect Obama. His statement regarding the need for conservation, renewable energy, and dealing with climate change is more critical than ever. Hopefully the new Congress and the President-elect will do what is necessary to address these issues and stop the “foot-dragging,” irresponsible behavior of the past eight years.

– Mark Henry

Election Results Bring Conservation Opportunity and Need for Action

Statement of Audubon President and CEO John Flicker following the election of President-elect Obama and the new Congress

"Voters in this historic election cast their ballots not only for change, but for a new era of hope for our environment, and the people, birds, and other wildlife that depend on it. Washington has been ignoring critical environmental issues far too long. President-elect Barack Obama and a more environmentally aware Congress offer the promise of leadership and fundamental change that could usher in new protections for America's great natural heritage and a new lease on life for species in decline.

"Despite real reason for optimism, we cannot take conservation gains for granted. Audubon is committed to helping the new Administration and Congress to live up to their great promise; and to make conservation, clean energy and green jobs part of America's path to a brighter tomorrow.

"Through our local Chapters, state offices and national grass roots efforts, Audubon will join with others in the environmental community to ensure that our newly elected leaders lead the way on issues vital to our environment, our economy, and diversity of life on Earth."

Issues demanding prompt attention include:

Presidential Appointments:
- President-elect Obama should start by appointing to key environmental positions within his Administration qualified leaders who will defend our clean air and water, protect habitat and endangered species, aggressively address global warming, and steward our great natural heritage for future generations.

Scientific Integrity:
- The Department of the Interior should systematically review and reverse decisions made by the past Administration under the Endangered Species Act that were influenced by political considerations and not based on sound science.
- President-elect Obama should send a clear signal to everyone in his administration to restore and
respect scientific integrity in all environmental decisions.

Global Warming and Renewable Energy:

- President-elect Obama has said that: "We cannot afford more of the same timid politics when the future of our planet is at stake." He's right. We welcome the opportunity to help him deliver his promised $150 billion plan for clean energy technologies that would protect our environment and stimulate the economy, creating up 5 million new green jobs.

- The Congress should pass legislation providing significant incentives for development of renewable energy such as a strong Renewables Portfolio Standard and a long-term extension of the Production Tax Credit, and pass significant legislation to address global warming with a comprehensive cap-and-trade program.

- The new Administration and Congress must lead a transformation in American energy production and use through investments in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies. This can minimize the fluctuation of gas prices while protecting our beaches, coastal ecosystems, and the Alaskan landscape from the threats of oil and gas drilling.

Endangered Species Conservation:

- We'll work with the Administration to secure reversal of the Bush administration's weakening of the Endangered Species Act, such as the controversial decision to allow agencies to self-consult regarding the impacts of federally-approved projects on endangered species.

- Congress should pass new tax incentives to encourage private landowners to work toward recovery of endangered species.

Bird and Habitat Conservation:

- The Administration and the Congress should reinvest in the National Wildlife Refuge System and address the unacceptable $3.5 billion maintenance backlog crippling this critical tool for conservation.

- The Congress should pass legislation to conserve neotropical migratory birds and address the steep declines in America's common birds that are disappearing from parks, farms, and backyards across the country.

Ecosystem Restoration:

- The Administration and the Congress should fund significant new restoration projects to improve the status of America's great natural ecosystems: The Mississippi River, the Everglades, Long Island Sound, and the Great Lakes.

Though economic times are hard, there's no time like the present to shape the future of our world for birds, other wildlife, and for people too.

---

AOU Plans Meeting in Philly

The 127th stated meeting of the American Ornithologist's Union will take place 12-15 August 2009 at the University of Pennsylvania.

The first full day of the conference, Thursday, August 13, will feature an initial session that may be of wide interest. After kicking things off with welcoming statements from various dignitaries, Scott Weidensaul will present a lecture focusing on the central role of Philadelphia in the history of American ornithology. That lecture will be followed by a plenary presentation from Bob Ricklefs, one of the major figures in modern ornithology. His presentation will focus on island birds, including the important contributions of James Bond and other ornithologists affiliated with the Academy of Natural Sciences. The current plan is to make it possible for persons to register for that session separately from the conference as a whole in case some would like to be involved in an exciting but limited way.

– Robert L. Curry, Ph.D.

PSO Annual Meeting

May 15-17, 2009

Quakertown Holiday Inn

Bucks County
Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology
Annual Meeting Scholarship Program

In order to foster an interest in, and appreciation for birding and ornithology in Pennsylvania, each year the PSO will provide a scholarship for a person 18 years of age or younger OR an undergraduate college student who wishes to attend the PSO annual meeting. (You may not nominate someone without his/her knowledge or permission)

✈ The person must be nominated by a current PSO member.
✈ If the nominee is younger than 18, the nominating PSO member must be attending the meeting and must be responsible for transportation to/from the meeting and must be responsible for the youth during the meeting (see below) if a parent/guardian is not accompanying the youth.
✈ The youth’s parent/guardian must sign below giving the youth permission to attend the PSO meeting with the sponsor.
✈ PSO will pay the recipient’s meeting registration, food (banquet, lunch, 2 breakfasts), and lodging (up to 2 nights), and transportation costs incurred by the recipient.

In order to complete your nomination, please send this form to Shonah A. Hunter (shunter@lhup.edu), or by land mail to: Dr. Shonah A. Hunter, Department of Biological Sciences, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA 17745 by April 15, 2009. Selection will be conducted by a committee.

Name of Nominee: ______________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________________
Age __________ Birth Date ______________________________ Nominee’s Phone No. ______________________________
Email address: ______________________________________________________________
If a college Undergraduate student, College Attending: ______________________________________________________________
Nominee’s Involvement with Birding (Please describe, providing as many details as possible. Attach a page, if necessary)
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Name of nominating PSO Member: ____________________________________________ Phone No. ______________________________
Email address: ______________________________________________________________ Relationship (if any) to Nominee ______________________________________________________________________
If the nominee is younger than 18, the nominating PSO member must sign the following statement: In nominating this youth, I understand that I will be responsible for the youth at the annual meeting and for his/her transportation to and from the meeting.
____________________________________________________________________________
(Signature) __________________________ (Date) __________________________

If the nominee is younger than 18, the parent/guardian must sign the following statement: In allowing my child to be nominated, I understand that PSO is providing the scholarship for my child to attend the annual meeting. The person nominating my child has my permission to transport him/her to and from the meeting and to be responsible for her/him during the annual meeting.
____________________________________________________________________________
(Signature of Parent/Guardian) __________________________ (Date) __________________________
Pennsylvania Bird Lists Report Form for 2008

Name (Please print)

Address

City          State          ZIP

Pennsylvania Bird Lists Report Totals as of 31 December 2008
Send by 20 January 2009 to:
P. O. Box 482
Hanover, PA 17331

Peter Robinson  pabirder@hotmail.com

PLEASE include only those species included in the Official List of the Birds of PA (see www.pabirds.org) or The Birds of Pennsylvania (McWilliams & Brauning), unless you are very certain of the bird’s ID, and very confident that the bird is a wild one, not an escapee. Do not include Black Swan, Mandarin Duck, European Goldfinch, etc. If you can, please send only the numbers that are new or have changed from last year. There is no need to submit any numbers that are the same as last year.

PA Life List _______ PA Life List Unassisted ________ (Species found on your own. Not “chased” birds.)

PA 2008 Annual List _______ Highest PA Annual List ________ Year ________

Total Ticks ________ (Total for all life lists for all counties. Blue Jay in all 67 counties = 67 ticks.)

County Life Lists (100 species or more)

Adams _______ Delaware _______ Monroe _______
Allegheny _______ Elk _______ Montgomery _______
Armstrong _______ Erie _______ Montour _______
Beaver _______ Fayette _______ Northampton _______
Bedford _______ Forest _______ Northumberland _______
Bucks _______ Franklin _______ Perry _______
Blair _______ Fulton _______ Philadelphia _______
Bradford _______ Greene _______ Pike _______
Bucks _______ Huntingdon _______ Potter _______
Butler _______ Indiana _______ Schuylkill _______
Cambria _______ Jefferson _______ Snyder _______
Cameron _______ Juniata _______ Somerset _______
Carbon _______ Lackawanna _______ Sullivan _______
Centre _______ Lancaster _______ Susquehanna _______
Chester _______ Lawrence _______ Tioga _______
Clarion _______ Lebanon _______ Union _______
Clearfield _______ Lehigh _______ Venango _______
Clinton _______ Luzerne _______ Warren _______
Columbia _______ Lycoming _______ Washington _______
Crawford _______ McKean _______ Wayne _______
Cumberland _______ Mercer _______ Westmoreland _______
Dauphin _______ Mifflin _______ Wyoming _______
                  _______ York _______

County Annual Lists

________________________________          ____________          ____________
________________________________          ____________          ____________
________________________________          ____________          ____________
________________________________          ____________          ____________
Answers to Bird Quiz
(page 4)

1. Green Heron, Wilson’s Snipe, Rock Pigeon, Blue-headed Vireo, Eastern Towhee, and Baltimore Oriole (which were Green-backed Heron, Common Snipe, Rock Dove, Solitary Vireo, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Northern Oriole in the first atlas)

2. Wilson’s Storm-Petrel, which breeds on the Antarctic continent

3. Prairie Warbler

4. Calandra Lark (*Melanocorypha calandra*), which Poole said “may have been a ‘stowaway’ on a trans-Atlantic vessel”

5. Barred Owl