

# PSO Pileated



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

It was overcast and still on the early fall morning in the eastern part of the state where I live when I sat down to write this President's message. Like other birders at this time of the year I'm anxious for the mornings to come to see what the overnight skies have brought. Most times my expectations exceed the reality but every once in a while migrants are all over the yard and fields, and it is those mornings that find a permanent place in both my notebook and my memory.

We birders must be eternal optimists. Otherwise why do we venture out searching for rare and oftentimes elusive birds knowing that more often than not we'll come back home disappointed? I guess part of what we do is directly attributed to the thrill of the hunt, but I like to think there's more to it than that. I like to think that a lot of our birding experiences lead to knowledge and education that we will subsequently teach to others and use ourselves. I also hope that the education we receive by going out into the field teaches us about conservation and habitat preservation because without them there'd be nothing to venture out for.

The mission statement of the PSO is, "to foster the study and appreciation of the birds of PA and to promote the conservation of birds and their habitats." But I admit that when I joined this organization I had never read those words. I just knew there were birders in this group who could teach me things.

I also admit that at one point I thought PSO was just a group of scholars and ornithological professionals whose use of bird language would leave me wondering what they were talking about. But I couldn't have been more wrong

about that. PSO is for everyone. Our membership includes birders at all levels of interest, knowledge, or accomplishment, from backyard birders who just want feeding tips to professors with doctorate degrees and knowledge of *Laridae* molt sequences.

None of us, however, would have a reason to belong to PSO or any other similar organization if there weren't copious amounts of suitable and sustainable wildlife habitat available for birds and all kinds of wildlife. To that end, PSO's board of directors is often consulted on conservation issues, most of which aren't included in the

newsletter, nor should they be. Different problems require different approaches. Some issues are local, others are statewide, and many prefer to stay behind the scenes. Some are controversial, some are not; but sometimes controversy is unavoidable, and at times can be a good thing. Much as we'd like to think it, we birders don't live in a vacuum. Sometimes it takes controversy to awaken us.

Hopefully, though, there will be nothing controversial about next year's annual spring meeting at Presque Isle State Park. Pennsylvania has countless great places to bird, and Presque Isle is among those at the top of the list. Details will be forthcoming in future newsletters.

Fall is a time to get out to look for the birds you've thought about all summer. Get up at dawn and go out to hone your fall warbler identification skills. Visit a hawk watch to see how good you are at identifying speck birds gliding down the ridge. But most of all get out and have a good time.

– Arlene Koch



Visit a hawk watch to see how good you are at identifying speck birds gliding down the ridge. This light morph Rough-legged Hawk was photographed by Steve Gosser.

# The Raven Reporter



Tales of  
Discovery about  
Pennsylvania  
Birds

## Plan Ahead for the Winter Eagle Survey

The 2010 Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey will be held from Wednesday, 30 December 2009, to Wednesday, 13 January 2010, with target dates of 8 and 9 January. This survey targets bodies of water and other locations where Bald Eagles are commonly found in winter. Pennsylvania participates in a national survey. Last year, Pennsylvania participants reported 185 Bald Eagles, a record number, including 108 adults and 77 immature or unknown aged eagles in more than 137 hours spent in the field.

The winter eagle survey serves to follow trends in Bald Eagles and monitor areas that they use that time of year. It is more than that, however, because eagles are re-establishing their territories and repairing old nests or building new ones. So, it is a great time to scout for new nests and check older nests, getting a head-start on breeding season monitoring. We found a few new nesting pairs during last year's winter survey.

If you are interested in participating in the winter eagle survey, please contact Doug Gross. A list of target areas will be given in the December column.

## PA eBird Presentation Ready to Roll! Give an eBird Talk!

Brian Byrnes of Audubon Pennsylvania has developed a power point slide presentation about Pennsylvania eBird. The PA eBird project is a partnership between the PA Game Commission, PSO, Audubon Pennsylvania, and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology (CLO). The CLO team has developed an eBird presentation that we have adapted to Pennsylvania. It will allow more people to become ambassadors for eBird and for keeping good bird records.

The mission of eBird is "To *gather, archive, and disseminate* observational data recorded by birders to better understand distribution, abundance, and factors affecting birds on a hemispheric scale." The partners listed above have the common interest in monitoring bird populations and habitats. E-Bird provides an easy way to

record your observations, keep track of your records, and contribute to our common knowledge of birds.

The new *Pennsylvania eBird* presentation is a basic "why and how" tutorial presentation. Its main goal is to introduce eBird to people and show them how it works. It gives an overview of the basic objectives of eBird as well as our state's goals. It offers many exciting features that allow people to keep personal bird records and view these records on-line. You can keep track of arrival and departure dates of each species, comparing data from various locations and years. The eBird "bar charts" or "phenograms" are histograms that show a bird's seasonal occurrence graphically in a format anyone can understand. The eBird's geo-locating capabilities allow the observer to pinpoint where an observation took place. This strongly connects the bird to the habitat and the local landscape. This is just the sort of feature that is so important for people's personal lists and our common interest in keeping track of where our birds are found, including and especially the Important Bird Areas.

Ever wonder how to add field notes or check entries? The new eBird presentation shows how to do this. One of the most useful features of eBird is the ability to import and export data. So, if you have bird records stored in a spreadsheet, database, or a commercial bird records program, you should be able to transfer data to and from eBird. Of course, the many tools that eBird offers are best learned from personal experience, but this presentation gives a nice introduction to some of the most important features.

Each record submitted to eBird undergoes some level of review and verification. The quality of the database must be checked to maintain its integrity. So, behind the scenes data are screened through data filters, and data editors contact contributors about records that seem out of the ordinary. This can pertain to numbers as well as species identification. Not only do people make mistakes of omission and commission in the field, but also make basic data and typing errors.

The presentation is designed so almost any competent birder can present it. This is an opportunity for members of bird clubs and Audubon Chapters to teach others how to use eBird and keep good bird records.

To get a copy of the new PA eBird presentation please contact Doug (see below) or Brian Byrnes, Important Bird Area Coordinator, Audubon Pennsylvania, 1201 Pawlings Road, Audubon, PA 19403; (610) 666-5593 ext. 106; [bbyrnes@audubon.org](mailto:bbyrnes@audubon.org)

## PA eBird Needs Good Stories

The Pennsylvania portal for eBird was opened last year, and many birders have been participating in the program.

Several birders post their eBird reports to the Pennsylvania listserve to share with others in that format. With the 2<sup>nd</sup> PA Breeding Bird Atlas field seasons behind us, we are focusing more on eBird for our bird inventory and monitoring.

I plan to put more emphasis on eBird in the “post-Atlas” era. There are many great stories about Pennsylvania birding and conservation efforts that go unreported to the general birding community. One of the purposes of the eBird site is to enhance the birding community through communication. Please submit good stories about Pennsylvania’s birds and birding that I can include on the PA eBird front page. You will increase the distribution of your news by doing so.

The Pennsylvania eBird site is found at: [www.ebird.org/content/pa](http://www.ebird.org/content/pa). For additional stories and news, visit the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's e-Bird site: <http://ebird.org>. The PA Game Commission website has a portal for PA eBird right on the front page (look for the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker). Visit it soon.

### **eBird Rare Bird Gadget – Good Tool, But Use with Caution**

Imagine having all the reports of rare birds entered into eBird in your home state delivered straight to your desktop! That's exactly what the new eBird Rare Bird Gadget does. The eBird team has developed a Google Gadget to deliver rare bird sightings straight to your desktop, including important details such as observer and mapping information. Any record submitted to eBird that requires the user to click the "rare species" link on the checklist page will now appear on the rare bird gadget. You can learn within minutes when someone reports a great bird in your region.

The eBird Rare Bird Gadget is a feed that brings rare bird records from our database to your desktop within minutes. Now eBird users can get up to the minute alerts on rare birds reported to eBird! To learn more about the gadget, check out the eBird website news page. The eBird Rare Bird Gadget feeds eBird data to your desktop via iGoogle. There are ways to delay reports of rare bird occurrences that may be of a sensitive nature so others do not disturb a bird or a sensitive location if that is the situation. Please note that eBird “rare bird gadget” shows all submissions for a location, even those that have not yet been reviewed. Only the reports that are highlighted in green have actually been verified by the eBird review team. So, a rare bird that shows up on the gadget may not necessarily be a verified record. It is easy to make an error of identification or entry, as many of us know from personal experience, so be careful how you react to these kinds of records.

### **Bald Eagle Nesting Survey 2009**

The 2009 Bald Eagle nesting season is long over, but we are still gathering data about nests. We have evidence for at least 172 active nesting pairs, a new record for the population (156 nests in 2008 was the previous record). A new record was made by the Portland nest in Northampton County which produced four eaglets. This is an extremely rare event and eagle experts do not know of another Bald Eagle nest documented to have produced so many eaglets. Most pairs produce 1-3 eaglets.

We still lack information about several territories that were active in recent years, so this tally may yet increase. Several pairs seemed to have maintained their territories but did not incubate eggs this year, a new wrinkle in the eagle story. We believe that some pairs may not nest every year even though they maintain their territory. One of our biggest challenges is to get productivity information about nests that are well obscured by vegetation. Sometimes people know about these nests but do not report to us. We appreciate any information about nest productivity or new nests that might be undocumented by the PGC eagle nest survey. The state Bald Eagle nest survey benefits from a great deal of cooperation and the contributions of many. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to our survey.

Enjoy your birding adventures!

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## **Ain't No Dumb Question**

by Arlene Koch

When I started looking at birds 35 years ago, I knew almost nothing about them. In fact, I didn't even know why I was doing it. One day, while staring blankly out the window holding a colicky baby in my arms, I saw a flock of what I deemed at the time to be “really tiny” birds in a close tree and I had no idea what they were. What startled me, although I didn't admit it to my husband David who went to Sears that very day and spent \$35 on a pair of binoculars, was that I was even curious. And, just for the record, those birds turned out to be Ruby-crowned Kinglets although I didn't know that until weeks later when I bought a bird book.

Back then I didn't know any “birdwatchers,” so there was no one to question. But as the years passed, and I finally

found other persons doing the same thing; I asked so many questions that I'm sure some of them couldn't wait to get away from me. Things were different then. There were no listserves, iPods, cell phones, blogs, or facebook. It was all face to face or at least phone to phone.

Somewhere along the way, as happens to all long-time birders, I became the one being asked instead of the one doing the asking. I remember exactly when it happened. A woman on an Audubon field trip whispered in my ear, "Why is that bird a female Black-throated Blue?" The trip leader (name withheld because he became a close friend) had said I was wrong, but I insisted I wasn't, probably due to leftover bravado from having worked next to the Russian Embassy in D.C. But lest you think from that point on I knew what I was doing, think again. I spent years asking what others no doubt thought were dumb questions and continue to do so to this day every time I'm around more experienced birders.

There are times, though, when I long for those days. I'd sure like to look like I did then and know what I know now – yeah, right! I'd like to relive the thrill of seeing each new bird on my backyard list. What I wouldn't want to relive, however, were those awkward, sometimes downright embarrassing moments when I asked a question and the answer I got was a stare so cold it could kill a moose. Those are the reactions and the people you never forget. Thankfully there weren't – and aren't – many birders like that.

Years ago, while birding with friends in Cape May, we ran into an old guy with a beat-up scope looking at shorebirds. My friends thought I was crazy to ask him what he was looking at because he pretty much looked like an itinerant. But I did and half an hour later I knew more about the molt sequences of shorebirds than I wanted to know. It turned out that he was a highly respected shorebird authority and whenever I hear his name (he's now deceased), I smile inwardly. He didn't have to answer my dumb question that he had probably answered hundreds of times before, but he did; and I'll always be grateful. I think of him every time a visitor to Hawk Mountain's North Lookout asks, "How do you know you're not counting the same birds twice?" That's one I can answer. But I still have no answer for, "Are the rocks still growing?"

## Save a Tree

If you would like to receive your *PSO Pileated* via the internet instead of receiving the paper copy, please e-mail Frank Haas at [fchaas@pabirds.org](mailto:fchaas@pabirds.org). You will be notified when the current newsletter is posted on line.

## Acreage Added to Frick Park

Some of you birded Pittsburgh's Frick Park with me during PSO's annual meeting last year. While it's not really a destination for a special trip, any birders who find themselves in Pittsburgh an hour or even an entire morning, will find it's worth checking out. Frick is only 15 minutes from downtown and easily reachable by public transportation. And recently, the addition of 150 acres has increased its size by almost 25 percent.

When I was a young boy, I was sure Henry Clay Frick, the coal baron who went into business as Andrew Carnegie's steel mill manager, was a hero and philanthropist. Even though I'm now familiar with another side of Frick as a ruthless crusher of the infamous Homestead Strike, I'm still awfully happy to live a block away from the park that bears his name and was built around his original gift of 150 acres of hilltop and ravines to the City of Pittsburgh in the early part of the 20th century. In the last few years the park, which had grown to 453 acres of mostly wooded hills and streams, expanded to somewhere around 600 acres, definitely one of the most exciting developments since the park was founded.

Frick is a real treasure for birders. Its playgrounds, tennis courts, and other manicured or developed sections, located mostly on the periphery, comprise a relatively small part of the total acreage; the rest is woods.

Some of its oaks and sycamores are the largest around, and its streams, especially Nine Mile Run, have benefited from one of the largest environmental restoration projects in the country. (But that's a separate story – see <http://www.ninemilerun.org/>). In 2002, the Three Rivers Birding Club held a birding festival at Frick in conjunction with the Frick Environmental Center. Birders recorded 101 species during a May weekend – not bad for a park completely surrounded by city; but the park functions as a migrant trap – birds see it as a green island as they traverse miles of heavily developed suburbs and city, stopping to rest and feed.

The original 150 acre kernel of the park resulted as a stroke of luck. Frick had planned to build a mansion on it and keep all or much of it as his estate, but he had promised his teenage daughter, Helen, anything she wanted for her birthday. You guessed it – she wanted him to donate the land to the city so that future children could play in its woods as she did as a girl. "You said 'anything,'" is how the story goes about his hesitation after her request. "So I did, and you shall have it," or words to that effect, followed, and the rest is history. The history continued with the city's purchases of additional land until it reached 453 acres prior to my boyhood in the 1940s. For sixty years of my life it remained a mile long and, at its widest point in the south a half mile, with a huge, ugly, poisonous, scar adjacent to its southern border, running

along the Nine Mile Run Valley to the Monongahela River. For many years, we Pittsburghers watched the night sky regularly glow red. Slag from Jones and Laughlin's nearby iron and steel works lit the sky a dull red as it was being poured into the Nine Mile Run Valley, from the point where the stream exited Frick Park, down almost to the banks of the Monongahela. Both banks and a hundred yard wide swath of the flood plain on either side of a half a mile of Nine Mile Run Valley were covered to the top of the adjacent hilltops with slag. It stayed that way for perhaps 75 years, long after the Pittsburgh steel mill that produced the slag gave way to a housing development and shopping center. Nine Mile Run coursed at the bottom of a moonscape, barren, except as time went on, for a few patches of weeds and an occasional small sumac or locust that found a niche to flourish in the crumbly calcium carbonate, laden with heavy metals and other industrial waste.

Oddly, the inhospitable, sparsely vegetated slope was where one of the largest groups of Northern Mockingbirds in Allegheny County could be found – that means we'd often see a few there. A pair of American Kestrels frequented the top of the slag heap, as did a Killdeer. It was worth checking on the Christmas Bird Count. Nearby, at Duck Hollow, where Nine Mile Run empties into the Mon, the very sewage that made the stream an unpleasant place to visit, drew shorebirds, gulls, and waterfowl. Last winter, my wife Sue and I spotted a Brant there; diving ducks in small numbers, including scaup, Ring-necked Ducks, mergansers, and Buffleheads, show up from late fall through spring.

In the late 1990s, talk of change started surfacing. I learned about it from a group of artists from Carnegie Mellon University's Studio for Creative Inquiry who were agitating for the cleanup and environmental restoration of the stream and slag heap, to be followed by the creation of a greenway connecting Frick to the river. It was controversial. The land had been transferred to Pittsburgh's Urban Redevelopment Authority, and there was plenty of agitation to put in a shopping center. Then, a proposal arose to sell the land to PennDOT or the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission to allow a highway to come down the valley. Both proposals promised economic advantages. The last proposal from a developer to build new housing on top of the slag got a lot of traction with promises to restore vegetation to the slag, but the developers wanted to culvert (cover over) the smelly stream, out-of-sight (and insulated from smell) being the cheapest way to deal with the pollution problem.

The artists, and some colleagues from CMU and other local institutions, did biological, historical, and geological testing and inventories, finding a surprising diversity in the stream and slopes. They got grants to hold a series of public meetings, bringing in environmental restoration experts from all over the country to speak, give advice, and make assessments.

Years later, the story has an almost completely happy ending. Support for the greenway and its addition to the park won the day. Topsoil and native grasses cover the slag heaps, the top of one has a successful new housing development and seven million dollars of grants were obtained to have the Army Corps of Engineers restore Nine Mile Run to a much more natural stream by putting meanders in its bed, repairing and replacing a mile or so of leaky sewer pipes, and restoring wetlands along its course and that of its tributaries. Recently, the valley has been deeded to the city as part of Frick Park, so now the park runs almost two miles in length, from an urban neighborhood to the river.

Regrettably, the corps concluded that a bridge spanning Nine Mile Run conflicted with the stream's hydrology (don't ask me about it – I'm not good at four syllable words). As a result, the trail that runs down the valley is now broken where the old bridge used to be. Trucks carrying tons of slag used the bridge to cross to the other side, but since it's gone, the trail is now almost impassable where it hits the creek. A new bridge, however, costing the better part of a million dollars, is said to be fully funded, and construction is supposed to start soon.

Much work remains to be done besides the installation of the bridge. Sewage still spills into the creek after major rainfalls because of the region's combined sewer system that allows (nay, compels) overflow from sanitary sewers to storm sewers when the sanitary system is overloaded. Trash, dripping motor oil, and other pollution also all too often are flushed from the culverted, urbanized part of the watershed into the open part of the stream in the park. Storm flow pouring off the miles of the creek's watershed, especially the impermeable bulk that is paved with streets, businesses, and houses, sometimes wrecks the structures built to slow and even out the stream's flow, requiring repair. Even so, the improvement over the ugly, poisonous monstrous slag valley that I remember from not so long ago is manifest.

Sue and I bird the area quite a bit. There's a new boardwalk through one of the restored wetlands that we especially like. Annually, Chuck Tague, Sue, and I lead a combination stream restoration and bird outing in conjunction with the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association. Watch for it at <http://www.3rbc.org> and join us if you can. As a matter of fact, when we're in town, Sue and I bird Frick Park almost daily (well, Sue does, I'm a bit lax, but I get there a good bit). And if you're going to be in our area, email me at [snaggle719@yahoo.com](mailto:snaggle719@yahoo.com) and we'll see if we can bird there with you.

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# Ornithological Literature Notes

Avian research in Pennsylvania received international attention at the joint meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society and Association of Field Ornithologists in Pittsburgh in April 2009. This is the second in a series of articles summarizing these scientific presentations. Complete abstracts of the presentations are available on the Three Rivers Birding Club website [www.3rbc.org](http://www.3rbc.org).

Many studies are based on data obtained entirely or partly in our state:

! Elizabeth Gow and colleagues at York University and Queen's University in Ontario analyzed Wood Thrushes migrating in northwestern Pennsylvania to determine whether this species molts during migration.

! Holly M. McChesney and associates from West Virginia University studied the impact of removing invasive Morrow's Honeysuckle on nesting Field Sparrows at Fort Necessity National Battlefield in Fayette County.

! Grant Stokke and Margaret Brittingham from Penn State University analyzed environmental characteristics of 39 urban crow roosts in the northeastern United States. Much of the field work dealt with roost characteristics in Lancaster County, and Stokke examined a large winter roost in urban Pittsburgh during the study.

! Sarah E. Pabian and Brittingham investigated the importance of soil calcium in Ovenbirds' forest habitat. Measuring territory sites at 14 locations in central Pennsylvania, they found that sites with greater calcium concentrations contained more snails for the birds' diet and supported higher numbers of territorial Ovenbirds.

! Jackie Speicher, Dawn Konkoly, and Darryl Speicher of the Pocono Avian Research Center and Lisa Shreffler of Northampton Community College studied lunar influence on the fall migration of Northern Saw-whet Owls. They found significant differences in owl capture rates in an eastern hemlock/rhododendron swamp, which were associated with stages in the lunar cycle

! Scott Stoleson of the U.S. Forest Service evaluated effects of cutting mixed oak forests in northwestern Pennsylvania on Cerulean Warbler and 16 other conservation-priority species. His results indicated that partial cuttings ("shelterwoods") within mature forests

improved abundance not only in species of early-successional habitats but even in a canopy-nesting species, the Cerulean Warbler.

! Alyssa K. Ackerman and Daniel Ardia of Franklin & Marshall College found that suboptimal incubation temperature, contrary to predictions, has no negative effect on the level of Northern Bobwhite embryos' innate immunity to bacteria.

! Timothy Hoppe of the Pennsylvania Game Commission installed and monitored 23 experimental rooftop "gravel patches" in northwestern Pennsylvania as part of a Common Nighthawk conservation project that includes researchers from New Hampshire Audubon and Antioch University.



One study analyzed Wood Thrushes migrating in northwestern Pennsylvania to determine whether this species molts during migration.

Photo by Geoff Malosh

! Jeffery Larkin of Indiana University of Pennsylvania collected mitochondrial DNA samples from Golden-winged Warblers in north-central Pennsylvania as part of a team from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Environment Canada, Virginia Commonwealth University, Michigan Technological University, and the University of Cincinnati. The research examines hybridization between this species and the Blue-winged Warbler.

! Margaret I. Hatch at Penn State-Worthington and Robert J. Smith at the University of Scranton are studying whether analyses of hematocrit (the ratio of packed red blood cells to total blood volume) in Gray Catbirds are reliable measures of individual differences in the physiology.

! Andrew Wilson at Penn State University found that some grassland bird species in Pennsylvania, such as the Eastern Meadowlark, have benefited from habitats maintained by private landowners enrolled in the government's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

! David F. Brinker of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, using satellite-telemetry data, monitored winter movements of four pairs of breeding adult Northern Goshawks in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia. None of the goshawks moved more than 30 kilometers from the core nesting site, which suggested that goshawks observed at autumn hawkwatch sites are mostly dispersing juveniles and nonbreeding adults.

! Deanna Broughton and Daniel Ardia at Franklin & Marshall College investigated effects of carotenoids and immune activation on stress responses in the Zebra Finch.

–Paul Hess

## Conservation Corner

Some great conservation news comes from our country's neighbor to the south – Mexico. And of course, Mexico has some great birding, so I thought PSO members would be interested in this news.

Recently, the Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) and the Technical Subcommittee for Shorebird Conservation in Mexico published and presented the Strategy for the Conservation and Management of Shorebirds and their Habitats in Mexico.

This publication is the third national shorebird conservation plan in North America, joining those published for the U.S. and Canada (i.e., the United States Shorebird Conservation Plan and the Canadian Shorebird Conservation Plan). This latest shorebird strategy will promote the development of national programs and projects for the conservation and management of shorebirds and the wetland habitats they require in Mexico.

More than 60 people and 40 institutions representing academic, community, government, private, and non-governmental organizations participated in the process of developing this national strategy. The entire process was made possible through the participation of these institutions, along with support from the U.S. Forest Service, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., and SEMARNAT.

In another fairly recent development, a bill to ban the capture and export of Mexican wild parrots was introduced a year ago by the Environment Commission of the Deputy Chamber. It was passed in the Mexican Senate with near unanimous support and recently signed by President Felipe Calderon.

Mexico has 22 species of parrots and macaws, and roughly 90 percent of all them are in some category of risk. The latest Mexican classification (yet to be published) lists 11 species as endangered, five as threatened, four requiring special protection, and two as yet unclassified.

An estimated 65,000-78,500 wild parrots and macaws are captured illegally each year, with more than 75 percent of them dying before ever reaching a purchaser. Approximately 50,000 to 60,000 parrots die this way each year in Mexico.

Mexico only allows the sale of parrots via legal channels, with 3,000 to 4,000 parrots allocated for capture each year, according to government quotas. Unfortunately there is no system to differentiate between legally and illegally captured birds.

While this bill marks a victory for parrot conservation, enforcing this legislation is the critical next step.

And the last news item regarding Mexico comes from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). On June 4, 2009, WWF, the Carlos Slim Foundation, and the Mexican government announced a new initiative to support sustainable development in six priority regions in Mexico. This initiative will allow for maximizing conservation efforts to protect key areas from threats and protect the wildlife in these areas.

The six areas are the Gulf of Mexico, the Mesoamerican reef, the Monarch Butterfly reserve, the State of Oaxaca, the State of Chiapas, and the Chihuahuan desert.

For more information on this item and information on other WWF programs, visit their website at [www.worldwildlife.org](http://www.worldwildlife.org).

And Pennsylvania also has some great conservation news. In a news release issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on August 14, 2009, the City of Philadelphia will receive \$70,000 in grant funding as part of the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds. The Treaty, a partnership between The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the City of Philadelphia, and Fairmount Park, is a commitment to restore, conserve, and protect valuable bird habitat within Philadelphia's urban environment and to develop an informed public through education and training programs.

*(continued on page 8)*

## PSO Bird Quiz

How well do you know your Pennsylvania birds?

1. As of July 2009, two species have new English names. Which are they?
2. Pennsylvania still awaits the first confirmed White-faced Ibis. Besides distinguishing it from Glossy Ibis, what more subtle possibility would need to be considered?
3. Which three raptors, two casual and one common in Pennsylvania, feed primarily on large insects?
4. In early editions of his eastern field guide, Roger Tory Peterson described a species besides Blue Jay as sometimes sounding like a Red-shouldered Hawk. Can you guess the species?
5. Coordinators in our first breeding bird atlas disagreed about whether a warbler's distribution in the state was larger or smaller than in pre-atlas years. Which species?

Backed by the \$70,000 challenge grant from the Service, the Urban Conservation Treaty will support initiatives throughout Philadelphia such as a joint program between Audubon Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Zoo, and the Academy of Natural Sciences to study migratory bird collisions with buildings in downtown Philadelphia. The City will also increase and improve protected natural areas. Partner organizations will also match the grant money with funding and “in-kind” contributions of goods and services.

Congratulations to Philadelphia.

– Mark Henry, Conservation Chairperson

## Answers to Bird Quiz

(page 7)

1. Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow are now officially named Nelson’s Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sparrow by the American Ornithologists’ Union.
2. Hybrid Glossy Ibis x White-faced Ibis
3. Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, and American Kestrel
4. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
5. Cerulean Warbler

## 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:

	Membership Categories:	
PSO	Individual	\$ 28.50
2469 Hammertown Road	Family	\$ 32.50
Narvon, PA 17555-9730	Sustaining	\$ 42.50

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