



The

PSO Pileated



**The Biweekly Newsletter for the Pennsylvania Society for
Ornithology**

Thursday, April 16th, 2026

We hope you are all enjoying the beautiful weather and early morning bird songs! Lets dive into this weeks updates.

If you have photos to share or any questions or comments about the newsletter, email me at:
kaitlynstouch@gmail.com.

Happy birding!
-Kaitlyn Stouch
The PSO Pileated Editor

This edition's banner photo is courtesy of Nick Pulcinella.

**NOW OPEN - Registration for the 2026 PSO Birding
Festival!**

Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

2026 Birding Festival

(and Annual Meeting)

June 19 - 21, 2026

Blair County Convention Center
Altoona, Pennsylvania



Registration for PSO's 2026 Birding Festival is OPEN! We hope you will be joining us in Altoona for the Festival's first-ever visit to Blair County. Have you registered yet?

The Festival features an incredible [schedule](#) of field trips, presentations, vendors, and chances to socialize. Scheduled during the height of nesting season, field trips will include observing nesting behaviors and contributing to the Pennsylvania Bird Atlas. The Saturday evening banquet will include a keynote from Ross and Melissa Gallardy on a record-breaking Pennsylvania big year.

Blair County and the surrounding region are home to a wonderful variety of nesting birds. Festival field trips will visit wetlands, grasslands, and streamside and upland forests. So whether you want to search for Henslow's Sparrows, Cerulean Warblers, Osprey, or the Worm-eating Warbler featured in this year's logo, there is a trip for you.

Visit <https://pabirds.org/2026-overview/> to register.

The deadline to register for the banquet is June 9 and the deadline for all registrations is June 14.

Some field trips will fill, so early registration is recommended. Information on lodging and dining is available on the Festival website.

The Blitz Blurb



B4C

The 2026 PA Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation (B4C) is a means by which PSO raises funds to partner with Conservation Organizations big and small which are actively working one or more of the core areas supported by B4C funding:

- Bird-Safe Habitats
- Conservation Education
- Conservation Monitoring & Science
- Threat Mitigation

Organizations receiving funding must agree that the grant will support conservation work directly and not be used for administrative costs or for required habitat offsets associated with development projects. So, do the Blitz June 5-15.

Go to www.breedingbirdblitz.org for more information.

Bird the Blitz. Raise the funds. Protect the birds of PA.

This Week's Avian Action Alerts



1. LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN SUPPORT

Over 8,000 people submitted a comment to support restoring protections for the Lesser Prairie-Chicken under the Endangered Species Act. This level of support sends a clear message to the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service that people care about this bird. Research shows that this species deserves protection.

Many thanks if you took the time to voice your concerns. Watch for more opportunities to take action to protect this icon of the American prairie. Want to learn more about the Lesser Prairie-Chicken?

[READ MORE HERE](#)

2. MORE GOOD NEWS: U.S. DISTRICT COURT STOPS THE ESA SLAUGHTER

On March 30, 2026, a California U.S. District Court ruled in favor of the Center for Biological Diversity, which sued the Department of Interior over its gutting of the Endangered Species Act. The Amended Act would have set back protections for dozens of species that are close to extinction.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

3. TELL CONGRESS TO MAKE THE FARM BILL STRONGER TO HELP BIRDS

Grassland birds like the Bobolink and Lesser Prairie-Chicken are vanishing faster than any other birds in the U.S. and Canada – more than half of their populations have disappeared in the last 50 years. But there is hope: by restoring grasslands on farms and ranches, we can help bring these birds back.

A strong U.S. Farm Bill is crucial to making this happen, offering a once-in-a-generation chance to strengthen funding for programs that benefit birds, farmers, and rural communities alike.

Unfortunately, the House is proposing a Farm Bill loaded with weak provisions for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and includes harmful pesticide and forestry provisions.

Tell your members of Congress to vote NO on this version of the Farm Bill!

[TAKE ACTION NOW](#)

4. THE SCARLET Tanager MAY BECOME PA'S MIGRATORY STATE BIRD

This isn't just a bird lover's feel-good story. Pennsylvania's forests face mounting threats from invasive species, pests, and poor management, but sustainable forestry practices can protect birds and people alike, even when forests are logged. Sustainable forestry practices support clean water, wildlife habitat, and the hardwood economy. Supporting birds like the colorful Scarlet Tanager emphasizes just how important our forests are, since 10 – 13% of the global population of this vibrant songbird breed in mature hardwood forests in Pennsylvania. Please support HB 2316.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

Submitted by Laura Jackson, Conservation Chair

Call for Board Directors



Photo by Jeanette Green

At our annual business meeting in June, PSO's members will elect new Directors to the board. We are seeking enthusiastic members to help PSO continue and grow its work to improve birding and bird conservation across the state.

Directors serve a renewable three-year term, participate in six board meetings annually and assist in the activities of one or more committees. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about serving on the board, please contact [Carolyn Hendricks, PSO Vice President.](#)

Carl Martin: Wildlands Conservancy and the Thomas Darling Preserve- Webinar RECAP

Carl Martin's presentation is up now for viewing!

View it here: <https://youtu.be/oN3oBKySnxo>

Some quiz questions:

1. Which county is Thomas Darling Preserve in?
2. How can the costs of deer fence enclosure maintenance be dramatically reduced and the success of fencing increased?
3. What geologic process contributed to the formation of the bog at the preserve?
4. Active management for Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, and Golden-winged Warbler focuses on producing which successional stage of growth?
5. What rare insect was found, which is only known from 7 other locations?



Photo by Jeanette Green

Answers: 1. Monroe, 2. making an opening around the fence by clearing trees that are close enough to fall on the fence, 3. glaciation, 4. young forest, 5. Ashton's Cuckoo Bumblebee

2026 County Spotlights



**Fayette County
Birding Spotlight**



April 24-27, 2026



**Bradford County
Birding Spotlight**



October 16-19, 2026



Fayette County Birding Spotlight is next weekend! Are you ready?

Our [County Spotlights](#) are PSO-organized weekend field trips to lesser-birded counties in Pennsylvania. Be sure to save the dates for our 2026 County Spotlights!
Graphics by Tony Desantis.

Organization Information

To email a PSO officer or Board Member, click on the name below.

Officers

President – [Brian Byrnes](#) (Delaware)

Vice-President – [Carolyn Hendricks](#) (Bedford)

Secretary – [Sheree Daugherty](#) (Allegheny)

Treasurer – [Franklin Haas](#) (Lancaster)

Board Members

[David Barber](#) (Schuylkill) , [Chelsea Beck](#) (Elk), [Joseph Gyekis](#) (Centre), [Laura Jackson](#) (Bedford), [Jeff Kenney](#) (Chester) [Mary Alice Koeneke](#) (Butler), [Wayne Laubscher](#) (Clinton), [Richard Rieger](#) (Schuylkill), [Brian Shema](#) (Allegheny), [Doug Wentzel](#) (Huntingdon), [Karter Witmer](#) (Tioga)

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[View more info on our organization members here](#)



Did you Know...

We are on social media! We have a Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and even a Discord server for our members and friends. Make sure you join us on whatever your preferred platform is to get daily updates and chat with other birders around the state.



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