

The



PSO Pileated



The Biweekly Newsletter for the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

Thursday, May 14th, 2026

The sunshine is finally starting to become more common! As it warms up, you might be catching some more humming birds at your feeder and find yourself outside more. Enjoy all it has to offer!

We have lots of updates this week, including another important call for volunteers and the Fayette County spotlight summary!

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 Dave DeReamus.

Fayette County Spotlight Summary

Our 2nd of 3 spotlights for 2026 took us waaaaay down in the SW corner of PA. So far, those counties haven't been claimed by WV so we still count them as part of our 67 counties in the commonwealth of PA. We planned this one for the last weekend of April as we have done all of our April spotlights in the hopes the southern tier counties will have earlier migrants.

How will this one fare compared to other ones we have visited, being less populated and not birded as much as some others? We shall see...



[Continue reading here!](#)

Board of Directors Meeting Summary- April 16th

The PSO Board of Directors met via Zoom on April 16, 2026, from 7:00 to 8:17 PM, with President Brian Byrnes presiding. A quorum of directors was present, and the February 10 meeting minutes were approved unanimously without discussion.

Board elections and nominations were a central focus. Following Brian Miller's resignation, Laura Jackson was nominated for President, with current officers Carolyn Hendricks (Vice President), Sheree Daugherty (Secretary), and Frank Haas (Treasurer) seeking new terms. Of four directors with expiring terms, Chelsea Beck, Jeff Kenney and Karter Witmer agreed to continue, Mary Alice Koeneke declined. New director nominees Justin Merry, Connor Schmitt, and Aidan Hannon were approved, along with the full slate of officer and director candidates to be presented to membership before the June Annual Meeting.

The board approved letters of support for both the Erie Bird Observatory's DCNR grant proposal and Audubon Mid-Atlantic's initiative to designate the Scarlet Tanager as Pennsylvania's state migratory bird.

Committee reports highlighted upcoming awards, including honors for Marcia Bonta and Laura Jackson, and student research grants. Festival planning noted 87 registrants and potential 2027 locations. Conservation efforts include a \$22,000 fundraising goal for the Breeding Bird Blitz. Additional updates covered ongoing work on the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee reports, upcoming field events, and revisions to the Birds of Pennsylvania booklet.

Summary submitted by Sheree Daugherty

This Week's Avian Action Alerts



1. ASK YOUR STATE SENATOR TO VOTE FOR THE DATA CENTER ACT

House Bill (HB) 1834, is one of our first, real opportunities to provide real protections from unchecked development in Pennsylvania communities. The Pennsylvania State House of Representatives already passed this bill – now your voice is needed to help make this happen in the Senate. PENNFUTURE has already drafted the letter for you– but add your own words to it– and make your voice heard.

[TAKE ACTION](#)

2. HELP PROTECT BIRDS IN BOREAL FORESTS

Since many of our migratory songbirds nest north of the U.S. border, protecting their breeding grounds is important. The Seal River Watershed, spanning over 19,305 square miles in northern Manitoba, is one of the largest ecologically intact watersheds in the world. Home to numerous lakes and wetlands, vast boreal forest and over 30 at-risk species, the region holds immense ecological, cultural and economic value. It provides clean drinking water, carbon storage, and supports sustainable livelihoods through local food harvesting, ecotourism and conservation economies. Add your support to the proposal to protect the Seal River Watershed.

[TAKE ACTION](#)

3. JOIN THE 2026 PENNSYLVANIA MARSH BIRD SURVEYS

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is seeking dedicated volunteers for the 2026 Marsh Bird Surveys. Because secretive marsh birds are often under-detected, this specialized protocol uses

audio playback to help us understand the distribution and abundance of these rare species across the Commonwealth. Field data is entered directly into eBird and will promote conservation efforts for declining wetland habitats and the at-risk species that depend on them.

One key point - if you do a survey, please let your county Atlas coordinator know where so that duplication can be avoided.

[LEARN MORE](#)

4. UPDATE: ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COASTAL PLAIN LEASES

Thank you if you took the time last March to send a letter opposing drilling in the Coastal Plain. Despite thousands of letters in opposition, the Trump Administration opened lease sales in April across nearly 700,000 acres. Any new leases will be subject to a lawsuit brought by Natural Resources Defense Council, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Friends of the Earth. Indigenous groups and communities have also brought parallel lawsuits to challenge any oil or gas leases. To date, no major oil companies have purchased any leases, but another sale will be offered in early June 2026.

[TELL BIG OIL COMPANIES TO STAY OUT OF THE ARCTIC REFUGE](#)

Submitted by Laura Jackson, Conservation Chair

The Blitz Blurb



B4C

Teams taking part in the PA Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation (B4C) are composed as follow:

- Two or more people unless “Blitzing Without Boundaries” where one person suffices.
- In one county or more (your choice), for one day or more during the B4C period.
- Types of counts include the following: Regular (motorized), Low Carbon, Youth Focus, Atlas Block Boosting, and Blitzing Without Boundaries.

Team Registration is open from April 1 (no fooling) through June 3.

Go to www.breedingbirdblitz.org for more information.

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

Volunteers Needed: Purple Martins Condos



A purple martin is a native songbird and is the largest member of the swallow family. There are 3 species of martins: Eastern, Western, and Desert variety. Everywhere east of the Rocky Mountains is the eastern variety and they are almost 100% depend on humans for nesting places. West of the Rocky Mountains is the western variety. In the Southwest there is the desert variety. These birds migrate to Brazil every year after the breeding season in August and return the following spring in the March/April timeframe.

In 2017, in cooperation with Lehigh Valley Audubon and various local and state parks, purple martin towers, or now they are being called condos, were being installed.

These do take a little effort to keep them functional and keep them ready for the martins.

I currently manage 22 of these condos at 10 different locations and will be retiring after this year.

I hope there are people that would be interested in picking up the management effort at 1 or more locations.

An overview of tasks would be:

- Getting the condos ready in the spring for the martins.
- Place a handful or 2 of pine straw in the gourd and hang the gourd on the tower with a door covering the opening.
- Monitor the tower for the arrival of the martins.
- Remove the door covering the door after they arrive.
- Monitor the condos weekly for nest building, egg laying, egg hatching, fledging & invasive species of birds.
- Closing up the gourds and getting them ready for winter.
 - Remove the gourds from the towers.
 - Clean the gourds.

- A little maintenance on the tower.

-Either store the gourds at the park, or hang them back on the condo.

The locations are:

- Totts Gap Environmental in Bangor
- Minsi Lake in Bangor
- Louise Moore park in Easton
- Leaser Lake in northern Lehigh County near Wanamaker's General Store
- Albany Township Park in Kempton
- Bolich Farm on Hawk Mountain Road (Part of SGL 106)
- SGL 106 Rockland Dr. Orwigsburg.
- Kernsville Dam Hamburg
- Kaercher Creek Park in Hamburg

Please contact Mike McCarney with any interest and questions at mmcartney302@gmail.com .

Volunteers Needed for new Annotated List Committee

The last edition of the *Annotated List of the Birds of Pennsylvania* was published in 2005.

A quick survey of our members (and others) revealed a demand for a new edition.

I am putting together a committee to accomplish this task.

The project will include the following.

1. Decide on the format (if it ain't broke, don't fix it!).
2. Select a new cover photo.
3. Rewrite (update) the introductory pages.
4. Add new species (through taxonomic changes or new occurrences).
5. Update every species' occurrence descriptions.
6. Update the bar graphs.

The largest part of the work will be the updating of the data. I imagine splitting this up by assigning groups of birds to individual committee members (one taking warblers, one taking waterfowl, etc.).

Proofreading will also be a very important roll.

I can take care of the graphics and layout.

For updating the species accounts, I am looking for persons who have a good feel for bird distribution and occurrence in the state and are experienced with mining eBird data.

I expect to have one or two zoom meetings to get started, and then the slogging work will occur.

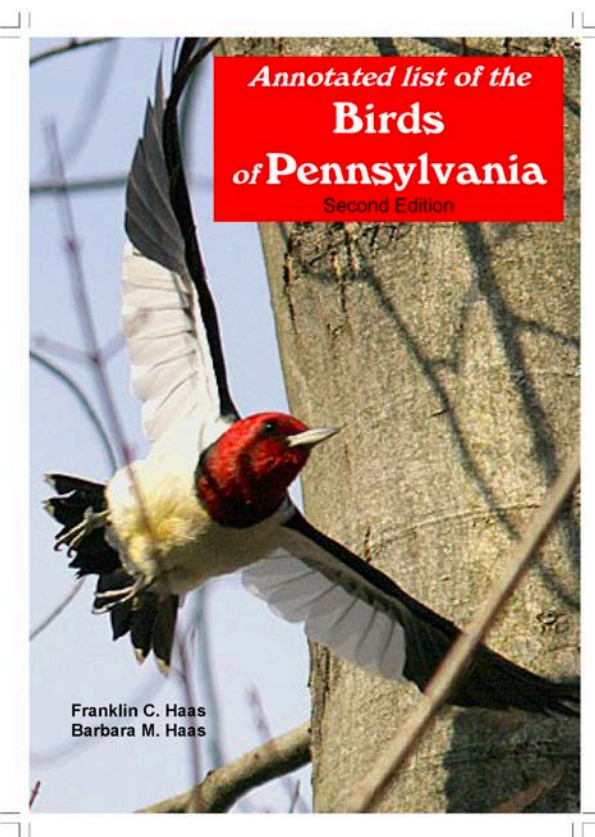
How much the work will be divided up will depend on the number of volunteers we get.

[If you are interested in volunteering, please let me know ASAP. Contact me by clicking here.](#)

Please respond by TOMORROW, May 15.

-Frank Haas
Publications Manager

PS: You can purchase the current Annotated List at <https://pabirds.org/ps0-sales-2/>.



	Erie Shore Northwest North South Ridge and Valley Foothills Piedmont Poconos	January February March April May June July August September October November December
Tundra Swan		Jan-Mar
*Wood Duck		Jan-Mar
Gadwall		Jan-Mar
"		Jan-Mar
Eurasian Wigeon		Jan-Mar
*American Wigeon		Jan-Mar
*American Black Duck		Jan-Mar
*Mallard		Jan-Mar
*Blue-winged Teal		Jan-Mar
Cinnamon Teal		Jan-Mar

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) - Rivers, lakes, fields, and in flight. Lancaster is the major wintering and spring staging area for the eastern North American population; up to 40,000 have been seen here at one time.

Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) - Variety of wetlands, breeding in cavities in swamps, marshes, or along creeks; will use nest boxes. Population rebounded from near extirpation in early 1900s.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) - Wetlands. Nested historically in Crawford and Butler.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) - Wetlands, usually with American Wigeon. Most birds identified are males.

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*) - Variety of wetlands during migration; requires emergent vegetation for nesting. Several old and one recent (1986) nesting record in Crawford.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) - Wetlands, but may occasionally nest far from water. Decreasing, in part due to competition and interbreeding with Mallard. Appears to be more susceptible to disturbance than Mallard.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) - Almost any wetland, including those in urban areas but may nest far from water. Most common and widespread waterfowl in Pa. Only during a complete winter freeze do populations diminish as the birds move out.

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) - Wetlands with emergent vegetation, less common on open water than many other ducks.

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*) - Seven or eight records: Quemahoning Res. Somerset, 4/15-17/1954 (Leberman 1988); PISP, late March, 1959 (Poole 1964); Turkhanock, Wyoming, 8/22/1974 (AB 28:616); Lake Arthur, Butler, 3/18/1984 (AB 38:910); Mammoth, Westmoreland, 4/27/1985 (AB 39:299); and Donegal L., Westmoreland, 5/8-31/1985 (photos-PORC) (AB 39:299). (Previous two records may have been same bird.) Octoraro L., Lancaster, 11/25/1994 (PB 8:218); Moraine SP, Butler, 11/5/1996 (PB 10:220); Curllsville, Clarion, 9/21/1998 (PB 12:131).

REMINDER: Register 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.

2026 County Spotlights



Our County Spotlights are PSO-organized weekend field trips to lesser-birded counties in Pennsylvania. Just one is left for 2026. Be sure to save the date!

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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Pennsylvania Birds Editor

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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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