



The Biweekly Newsletter for the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology

Thursday, May 28th, 2026

Although rain dampened Memorial Day Weekend, we hope you had some good birding experiences during the holiday. If not, this weekend looks like it is going to be a beautiful one for it!

In the meantime, lets dive into this week's 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 Nicholas Kolodick, taken 3/28/2021.

From the President's Desk

As spring migration winds down, PSO is swinging into high gear for a big month ahead. We will host our [sixth Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation](#) and [35th PSO Birding Festival](#). Both are great opportunities for birding and building connections with birders in your community and across the state. June will also mark the end of my two-year term as President, so I would like to take a few moments to both reflect and look to the future.

During my term, I have focused on two things: 1) strengthening the things PSO does well so that we can do them for many years into the future, and 2) trying out new ways to meet the needs of a changing birding landscape.

We have improved our festival visitor experience and secured sponsorships that allow us to keep the event as the best value in Pennsylvania birding, despite rising costs. We've enhanced support of the Pennsylvania Birds journal while transitioning the Pileated to a digital format, allowing for more timely communications about events and conservation. We are regularly hosting webinars that explore interesting topics in bird science and conservation. We've even expanded the Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation, supporting critical bird conservation projects and encouraging birders to explore during nesting season.

I am greatly appreciative of the many contributions of our officers and directors, as well as each and every member. Your support, encouragement, and willingness to embrace new approaches to beloved programs have strengthened PSO and set the stage for an exciting future.

Along that vein, both the Blitz and the Festival will have new wrinkles this year.

The PSO Birding Festival has typically been during spring or fall migration, but this year we will gather June 19-21 in Altoona. The event will highlight incredible birding options during nesting season and support the collection of valuable data for the 3rd Pennsylvania Bird Atlas. Since PSO was born from the connections birders forged during the initial Breeding Bird Atlas, a Festival that celebrates birding during the nesting season seems a perfect fit.

The Festival will take place just a week after we wrap up the Breeding Bird Blitz for Conservation. In its first five years, the Blitz has raised more than \$92,000, which PSO has distributed to conservation partners across the state. This year, we are raising money to support the Schuylkill County Conservancy and the 3rd Pennsylvania Bird Atlas. We are also introducing "mini-grants" to Pennsylvania conservation organizations that are nominated by the birders participating in the Blitz.

I am thrilled to be passing the baton to Laura Jackson as the next President of PSO. Laura's nomination will be formally made at the annual business meeting on June 19, the first night of the Festival; I am sure it will be met enthusiastically. Laura is a longtime board member, chair of the PSO Conservation Committee, and heavily involved in local and statewide conservation through Juniata Valley Audubon Society. I am excited to see how Laura puts her stamp on PSO and furthers our goal of promoting birding and bird conservation in Pennsylvania.

Thank you all for your continued support. It has been a great honor to serve PSO as President. I hope to see you in Altoona next month or on a trail somewhere, enjoying the birds that bring us all together. Good birding!

Pennsylvania Piping Plover Fest

Pennsylvania Piping Plover Fest – 18-19 July 2026 – Presque Isle State Park, Erie



Join the Pennsylvania Piping Plover & Common Tern Recovery Partnership, coordinated by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, as we celebrate 10 years of Piping Plovers nesting in Pennsylvania! This federal and state endangered shorebird was extirpated for more than 60 years. A multi-year dedicated effort to restore beach habitat and monitor for their return finally paid off. Learn about these inspirational birds and the team's recovery efforts through a free exhibit, free documentary film (7/18), evening ticketed reception with keynote presentation (7/18), and free guided hike (7/19). Pre-registration is required for certain events. More information and link to registration are available at <https://bit.ly/PPPFest>. We look forward to seeing you there!

This Week's Avian Action Alerts



1. SUPPORT THE SCARLET Tanager AS PA STATE MIGRATORY BIRD

Show your support of HB2316, the bill designating the Scarlet Tanager as the PA State Migratory Bird!

There are two ways to help: Add your name to the petition showing public support of the bill.

Share your Scarlet Tanager sightings and photos with Audubon:

<https://forms.gle/TaxYoghY3Z1nsMieA>

[SIGN THE PETITION](#)

2. SUPPORT PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY

Why are data centers allowed to use non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) with local governments to keep key project details hidden from the public? House Bill 2359 would put an end to this practice and prohibit local governments from entering into secretive NDAs with developers. We deserve to know if a data center might come to our community and what that project would look like.

Ask your state lawmakers to support the Data Center Transparency Bill (HB 2359) to stop data centers from trying to make secret deals with local governments.

[TAKE ACTION](#)

3. TELL CONGRESS TO FULLY FUND THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Congress is now making decisions about federal funding levels. Without adequate investment in ESA recovery programs, species on the brink may not get the support they need to survive and rebound.

Funding recovery is not just about wildlife; it supports clean water, healthy forests, resilient coastlines, and local economies that depend on thriving natural landscapes.

We can't afford to let decades of conservation progress stall due to underfunding

[TAKE ACTION](#)

4. URGE THE SENATE TO PASS A STRONG FARM BILL FOR BIRDS

The future of grassland birds – and the health of our land and communities – depends on strong conservation investments in the Farm Bill. Tell your Senators to ACT NOW: We need a strong Farm Bill for Birds!

[TAKE ACTION](#)

Submitted by Laura Jackson, Conservation Chair

The Blitz Blurb: Blitzing without Boundaries



B4C

Blitzing Without Boundaries may be for if you are out of PA during the B4C period of June 5-15, on vacation, or originally from PA but now living somewhere else, or perhaps just someone who lives outside of PA but knows the importance of grassroots conservation efforts like the Breeding Bird Blitz, this contest category is for you. The rules include:

- Composed of one or more people.
- Can be anywhere in the world except PA.
- Can be any number of days within the Blitz window.
- Cannot include Exotics as defined by eBird in a particular geographical area.

So even if you are not in PA during the B4C you can still help the birds of PA.

Go to www.breedingbirdblitz.org for more information.

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

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

A graphic for the Bradford County Birding Spotlight. It features a photograph of a bird perched on a branch on the left. On the right, there is a map of Pennsylvania with Bradford County highlighted in black. Text elements include "Bradford County Birding Spotlight" in a blue box at the top right, "October 16-19, 2026" in a blue box at the bottom left, and the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology logo at the bottom right.

Bradford County
Birding Spotlight

October 16-19, 2026

PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY FOR ORNITHOLOGY

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)

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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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