



Upland Informer

Volume 29 Issue 2

Official Newsletter of the Bartramian Audubon Society

Winter Spring 2011

Editor- Nancy Baker

Check us out online at www.bartramianaudubon.org



Upcoming BAS Membership Meetings

Our membership meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Jennings Environmental Education Center, 2961 Prospect Road, Slippery Rock, PA. The Education Center is located on Rt. 528 just west of its junction with Rt. 8- about five miles south of Slippery Rock. The meetings are free and open to the public.

March 14, 2011-Monday- Potential Threats to Northeastern Bats

Becky Lubold will review the ecological importance of bats, discuss reasons why they are susceptible to environmental changes, and examine two issues that pose particular risks: wind turbines and White Nose syndrome.

April 11, 2011-Monday- Birding in Southern Ecuador

Jerry Stanley will share highlights from he and his wife Kathie's 2010 trip to Southern Ecuador. He will discuss some of the bird family groups and how different they are from the ones in our backyards. His power point presentation will give you an up close look at some of the colorful bird life in Ecuador.

May 9, 2011-Monday-BAS Annual Awards Night

Please join us for our annual awards night. Bartramian Audubon Society will honor our new Wildlife and Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary owners with the presentation of their signs. We will also award two scholarships to local college students.



Upcoming Field Trips/Activities

February 19, 2011-Saturday-Great Backyard Bird Count at Jennings Environmental Education Center 9:00 a.m.-noon

Jennings staff and BAS will show you how to get involved with the "Great Backyard Bird Count", a national citizen science project. This is a great way for beginning bird watchers to get involved and learn some new skills. We will have volunteers there to help with identification. This program is designed for ages twelve and up. Call Jennings at 724-794-6011 for more details and to register by February 10.

April 30, 2011-Saturday-Lawrence County-BAS Spring Sanctuaries Tour I.

Join us for a morning visit to several of our sanctuaries in Lawrence County. Come see what people have done to enhance their property for wildlife. Prior registration is required.

Contact Gene Wilhelm for more details and directions at genewilhelm@aol.com or 724-794-2434 before April 1.

May 14, 2011-Saturday- Bird Migration Day at Jennings Environmental Center

Join us at 8:00 a.m. for the Pennsylvania Migration Count. Jennings staff will give a program on bird migration. We will go outside to identify and count birds. Dress for a walk. Also bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. If not, Jennings has some for use. For more information contact Jennings at 724-794-6011.

May 21, 2011-Saturday-Mercer County-BAS Sanctuaries Tour II.

Join us while we visit some of the BAS Sanctuaries in Mercer County. Prior registration is required. Contact Gene Wilhelm for more details and directions at genewilhelm@aol.com or at 724-794-2434 before May 1.

June 12, 2011-Sunday-Yard Sale

We are having a YARD SALE! From 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at The Birdwatcher's Store on route 108 in Slippery Rock. All funds taken in will be used to benefit BAS activities. If you have items you would like to donate, or if you would like to help with the sale, please call Kathie Goodblood at 814-432-4496.

June 26, 2011-Sunday-BAS Annual Picnic

Save this date! Details will follow.



Activities in Review

Butler CBC Report - December 18, 2010

..Suzanne Butcher, compiler Butler CBC

The Butler CBC covering a 15 mile diameter circle and including parts of Butler, Lawrence, and Mercer Counties was held on December 18, 2010 under cold, snowy, but partially sunny conditions. After a light scattering of overnight snow



Nancy Baker counting Snow Buntings

showers, roads were mostly clear but the ground depending on drifting had a wide depth of snow cover ranging from a few inches up to well over a foot. Running water was partly open but open water including Lake Arthur by count day was essentially frozen over and for the old timers, like last year, the birding was reminiscent of the counts in the 1980's and early 1990's. The temperatures ranged from 8° for the early owlers

to a high of 28° in the afternoon, but with the sunny sky and minimal wind, birding was pleasant, and with perseverance and determination, the 28 observers in the 10 field parties and the 21 feeder watchers totaled a count of 68 species and 12,602 individuals. American Robins accounted for 5744 of the total due in large part to the large robin roost in the vicinity of Moraine State Park. To complete the report, 9 additional 'count week' birds from December 15 were added by Debbie Darney.

The Birds (count week cw, and high count HC):

Tundra Swan-51(fly-over), Mallard-1, Greater Scaup-cw 1, Bufflehead- cw 2, Common Goldeneye- cw 2, Hooded Merganser- cw 1, Common Merganser- 6, Ruddy Duck- cw 4, Ring-necked Pheasant-2, Ruffed Grouse-2, Wild Turkey-88, Great Blue Heron-1, Bald Eagle-2 ad, Sharp-shinned Hawk-4, Cooper's Hawk-9, Red-shouldered Hawk-3, Red-tailed Hawk-54, Rough-legged Hawk-2 American Kestrel-5, American Coot- cw 1, Ring-billed Gull- cw 60, Herring Gull- cw 20, Rock Pigeon-323, Mourning Dove-381, Eastern Screech-Owl-2, Great Horned Owl-1, Barred Owl-1, Short-eared Owl-1, Belted Kingfisher-5, Red-headed Woodpecker-4, Red-bellied Woodpecker-65, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker-8 HC , Downy Woodpecker-94, Hairy Woodpecker-28, Northern Flicker-4, Pileated Woodpecker-17, Blue Jay-371, American Crow-292, Common Raven-3, Horned Lark-81, Black-capped Chickadee- 224, Tufted Titmouse-146, Red-breasted Nuthatch-9, White-breasted Nuthatch-97, Brown Creeper-9, Carolina Wren-9, Golden-crowned Kinglet-43, Eastern Bluebird-41, Hermit Thrush-2, American Robin-5744 HC, Northern Mockingbird-2, European Starling- 986, American Pipit - 7, Cedar Waxwing-90, Yellow-rumped Warbler-7 HC, Common Yellow-throat-1, Eastern Towhee-3, American Tree Sparrow-746, Field Sparrow-1, Song Sparrow-57, Swamp Sparrow-2, White-throated Sparrow-94, White-crowned Sparrow-4, Dark-eyed Junco-1011, Snow Bunting-92, Northern Cardinal, 253, Red-winged Blackbird-141, Eastern Meadowlark-4, Rusty Blackbird-4, Common Grackle-17, Brown-headed Cowbird-12, Purple Finch-25, House Finch-115, Pine Siskin- 5, American Goldfinch 243, House Sparrow 445. **Total Species: 68 and Total Individuals:12,602.**

Observers: 28 in 10 field parties totaling 21.5 hours and 21 miles on foot and 45.5 hours and 431.5 miles by car plus 6.5 hours and 30 miles owling; 21 watchers at feeders for 53 hours. **Total Party Hours: 67 and Total Party Miles: 452.5.**

We are most grateful to the many dedicated volunteers who faithfully reserve the date, year after year, to offer their services in a most cooperative way to cover the circle and make the count a resounding success. Special thanks go to Gene Wilhelm for attaining 30 years of counting. We also welcome the new participants, Betty Antal, Lee Carnahan, Cindy Dayen, the McKinney family- Beverly, Clayton, Gina and Scott- and Katie Schmidt. We also greatly appreciate John Stehle and the members of the Butler Outdoor Club (BOC), Cathy Setzer of the Birdwatchers Store (BWS), and Kathie Goodblood, the McKinney family, and Katie Schmidt who counted at Jennings Environmental Education Center. Our deepest thanks go out to all of you for your years() of participation and to Suzanne Butcher, Kathie Goodblood, Barb and George Dean, Jim and

Jon Barcaskey, Judy and Robert Pietz, Bob Walczak, and Gene and Joanne Wilhelm for their financial support as well.

The 48 Counters with their years() of participation:

Betty Antal (1), Nancy Baker (9), Jim Barcaskey (7), Jon Barcaskey (2), Beverly Barnett (3), Steve Bickel (5 - BOC), Suzanne Butcher (26), Lee Carnahan (1), Ruth Crawford (28), Dave Darney (15), Debra Darney (16), Barbara Davis (12), Charles Davis (10), Sharon Davis (10), Cindy Dayen (1), Barb Dean (15), George Dean (13), Kathie Goodblood (3), Margaret Higbee (6), Roger Higbee (6), Robert Jamison (5), Sally Jamison (11), Bill Klobetanz (2- BOC), Linda Lenz (3), Henry Lenz (3), Melissa Little (2), Robert Madjaric(8), Bev McKinney (1), Clayton McKinney (1), Gina McKinney (1), Scott McKinney (1), Richard Nugent (2), Bob Pietz (6), Judy Pietz (6), Katie Schmidt (1), Cathy Setzer (4 - BWS), Dawn Smith (2- BWS), Mark Smith (1- BOC), Alice Stehle (2-BOC), John Stehle (10- BOC), Mark Swansiger (14) Sandee Swansiger (14), Christy Tichy(2), Linda Wagner (10), Robert Walczak (15), Dorothy Weisberg (3-BOC), Gene Wilhelm (30), Joanne Wilhelm (18), Joe Young(2).

January 2, 2011-Pleasantville CBC

45th Pleasantville CBC, Jan. 2, 2011

Great Blue Heron – 1	Pileated Woodpecker – 1
Mute Swan – 1	Red-bellied Woodpecker – 21
Tundra Swan – 163	Blue Jay - 237
Canada Goose – 299	Am. Crow - 240
Am. Black Duck – 13	Common Raven – 2
Mallard – 49	Black-Capped Chickadee – 341
Lesser Scaup – 1	Tufted Titmouse – 95
Ring-necked Duck – 1	Red-breasted Nuthatch - 1
Bufflehead – 2	White-breasted Nuthatch – 107
Hooded Merganser - 2	Brown Creeper – 1
Common Merganser – 97	Carolina Wren – 8
N. Harrier – 1	Winter Wren - 1
Bald Eagle – 12	Golden-crowned Kinglet – 66
N. Goshawk – 1	Eastern Bluebird – 10
Red-shouldered Hawk – 1	Am. Robin – 7
Red-tailed Hawk - 8	Eur. Starling – 149
Am. Kestrel – 3	N. Cardinal – 66
Ring-necked Pheasant – 2	Am. Tree Sparrow – 46
Ruffed Grouse – 19	Field Sparrow - 4
Wild Turkey – 39	Song Sparrow – 3
Rock Pigeon – 79	Swamp Sparrow - 2
Mourning Dove – 103	White-throated Sparrow– 11
E. Screech Owl – 3	Dark-eyed Junco – 227
Barred Owl – 1	Brown-headed Cowbird - 27
N. Saw-whet Owl – 1	House Finch – 42
Belted Kingfisher – 2	Pine Siskin - 16
Downy Woodpecker – 46	Am. Goldfinch – 46
Hairy Woodpecker – 15	House Sparrow – 169
N. Flicker – 1	

Total 57 species – ties our high species count of 2005

2840 Individuals

Bold number indicates High count for that species.

Bold Species indicates new or unusual species for the count.

New count species – Lesser Scaup

Notable species – Mute Swan, Ring-necked Duck, N. Harrier, N. Goshawk, N. Saw-whet Owl, Swamp Sparrow.

Highest numbers for: Tundra Swan, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Ruffed Grouse
2nd highest numbers for: Mallard, Bald Eagle, Am. Kestrel (ties), Rock Pigeon, Red-bellied Woodpecker. Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown-headed Cowbird

Jan. 2, 2011: 3:15am to 5:00 pm. Temp. 26-34F; Snow cover – 0 - 3”; Still waters frozen, moving waters open; wind 0-10mph; partly sunny in am; partly sunny in pm.

Observers: 18 in field in 8 parties.

Time/distance: 44.5 total party hours; 305.5 total party miles; including 9.25 hours & 8.5 miles on foot and 35.25 hours & 297 miles by car. Plus 4.5 hrs and 37 miles owling.

Compiler: Russ States

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Oil City, PA 16301 pabirder@verizon.net

Count Circle includes area within 15 mile diameter circle, center 4 miles SSE of Pleasantville. Count area boundary includes Enterprise to the north, Tionesta to the East, Eagle Rock to the south, and Pa. Route 8 to the west.

*** Thanks to all who participated in the count this year. Hope to see you again next year***

Russ



Odds And Ends

The Bartramian Audubon Society has adopted the following position statement on natural gas exploration and extraction. This statement has been created by the Greater-Wyoming Valley Audubon Society with whom we completely concur. Now that the general election has occurred, and new officials are elected, we would like to release the following:

Position on Marcellus Shale Natural Gas Exploration and Extraction

Adopted November, 2010

Pennsylvania now faces a challenge of major environmental consequence. Natural gas has been much touted as a “bridge fuel” that can help the United States to transition away from polluting fuels such as coal and oil and toward less polluting fuels. Natural gas reserves that are locked in rock formations far below the earth’s surface have been exploited through a process known as “hydraulic fracturing,” or “fracking,” in various parts of the United States, most recently in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale formation. Although natural gas extraction industry officials claim that the fracking process is safe, evidence from Pennsylvania and other states suggests that the exploration, extraction, and transportation processes are far from perfect. Private drinking water wells and surface waters have been contaminated as a result of activities associated with the gas well drilling process. In addition, air pollution from compressing operations, road damage from large trucks and heavy equipment, noise from drilling operations, surface water withdrawals for use in fracking fluid, disposal of used fracking fluid, the retention of large volumes of toxic fracking fluid in the earth, habitat loss due to pipeline construction, wildlife mortality at retention ponds, and an industry track record that is far from stellar in terms of safety and environmental stewardship are among the public health and environmental concerns that have arisen as natural gas exploration

and extraction operations have become more commonplace in Pennsylvania. Moreover, inadequate regulations and/or inadequate enforcement of existing regulations and an apparent absence of clear and consistent guidelines and acceptable practices for natural gas exploration and extraction have compounded public fears that the exploration, extraction, and transportation processes are inherently unsafe.

Due to the aforementioned public safety concerns and to the potential for environmental degradation resulting from natural gas exploration, extraction, and transportation, the Officers and Directors of the Bartramian Audubon Society hereby express our support for state and federal legislation that is intended to regulate the natural gas industry in general and the fracking process in particular. We support efforts to prevent natural gas exploration/extraction from occurring within proximity (at least one mile) of public drinking water sources, and we further support the imposition of an equitable severance tax on natural gas extraction in Pennsylvania as other gas-producing states have imposed. We also recommend and would support legislation requiring the natural gas exploration/extraction industry to create a fund or a process, perhaps similar to the bonding of roads and supported in total by gas industry contributions, to compensate landowners for the fair market value of their properties in the event those properties are in any way devalued by gas industry activity. In addition, we encourage agencies that are responsible for watershed protection (Susquehanna River Basin Commission, Delaware River Basin Commission, and others) to cooperate to develop consistent standards by which surface water withdrawal would be permitted or denied. Finally, we support a moratorium on the permitting of new gas exploration and extraction sites in Pennsylvania to remain in effect until the Pennsylvania Legislature and the federal government have enacted laws to ensure that sufficient safeguards exist to protect human health and the environment.

In conjunction with supporting legislation and other efforts to safeguard public health and the natural environment, we oppose the leasing of state forest land and similar public lands for natural gas exploration, extraction, and/or transportation. In addition, we oppose the leasing of any federal, state, county, or municipal parks or natural areas that have been designated for wildlife propagation, recreation, and/or the protection and preservation of native plants, animals, or scenic vistas. Furthermore, we oppose the practice of “forced pooling,” “fair pooling,” or any other such practice that would permit the gas industry to drill beneath unleased properties. Finally, we oppose the granting of public utility status to the natural gas exploration, extraction, and/or transportation industries.

While we realize that the natural gas exploration, extraction, and transportation industries have become a presence, whether welcome or unwelcome, in Pennsylvania, and while we realize that that presence is likely to remain for some time, we believe that the natural gas industry in general and the fracking process in particular must be strictly regulated with persistent oversight. Moreover, we believe that such oversight by both the state and federal governments is appropriate and necessary to guarantee, to as great an extent as possible, that natural gas exploration and extraction occur safely in Pennsylvania.

**BARTRAMIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Membership Reminder

.....*Russ States, Membership Chair*

We welcome the many of you who have recently joined Bartramian Audubon Society.

As a reminder, the expiration date of your membership with the BAS should be on your address label. Please renew in a timely fashion as to not miss future newsletters. If you have any questions about your membership status, feel free to contact the membership chair, Russ States - pabirder@verizon.net.

B&B and Wildlife Sanctuary renewals should be handled through the sanctuary chair in June or July each year. The \$15.00 dollar checks should be made payable to BAS and mailed to Gene Wilhelm, 513 Kelly Blvd., Slippery Rock, PA 16057-1145.

**Bartramian Audubon Society
Associate and Newsletter Application**

Please check below

_____ \$15.00 BAS associate fee- includes newsletter

_____ \$5.00 newsletter only

Please send this form along with your **name, address, and e-mail** with payment to the:

Bartramian Audubon Society
PO Box 315
Slippery Rock, PA 16057

**National Audubon Society
Membership Application**

Please enroll me as a NEW member in the National Audubon Society. This membership will include membership in the National Audubon Society and *Audubon* magazine and the local Bartramian Audubon Society and the local chapter newsletter, the *Upland Informer*, but excludes the BAS Sanctuary Program.

Current introductory membership offer \$20.00
Student/Senior (62 and above) membership \$15.00

Name

Address

City State Zip

Please send this form with payment to

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