



# Upland Informer

Volume 30 Issue 1

Official Newsletter of the Bartramian Audubon Society

Fall 2011

Editor- Nancy Baker

Check us out online at [www.bartramianaudubon.org](http://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.*

### **October 10, 2011-Monday- Sea of Cortez**

Cathy Setzer will share stories, photos, and videos of her adventures in the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez). One of the world's best kept secrets--as far as marine mammals, birds, and other wildlife are concerned, is in and around the waters between Baja and the Mexican mainland. Cathy toured the area aboard the National Geographic Sea Lion and took with her donations of birding equipment for local conservationists.

### **November 14, 2011-Monday-Go Nuts Over Squirrels**

Squirrels may frustrate or fascinate, amaze or annoy, but one thing is certain: these furry friends can somehow always get our attention with their antics and amazing adaptations. Discover the truth about Pennsylvania's seven species of squirrels, including our largest squirrel, the groundhog. Some squirrels raid feeders, some bully our pets and one "Hairy Houdini" even managed to shut down NASDAQ for a day.

But learn to understand and appreciate these crafty creatures and you may be able to learn to live with and even enjoy, the "shadow tail" of the forest. Miranda Crotsley, Program Coordinator for Jennings Environmental Education Center will be our speaker.

### **December 12, 2011-Monday-Holiday Potluck**

Join us for our annual holiday get together. Bring a dish to share.



## Upcoming Field Trips/Activities

### **October 2, 2011-Sunday-Bird Walk at Pennsy Swamp, PA Game Lands #284**

Join us for a morning walk to look for some of the fall migrants. Bring your binoculars and a field guide. Beginners are very welcome. We will meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Game Lands

parking area on Pennsy Road. For more information contact Kathie Goodblood at 814-432-4496 or [larkwren@hughes.net](mailto:larkwren@hughes.net).

### **October 8, 2011-Saturday-Macoskey Center Nature Stroll**

Join us from 8:30-10:30 a.m. for a nature walk through the Macoskey Center/BAS sanctuaries of Slippery Rock University near the peak of autumn. Expect late blooming wildflowers, butterflies, bird migrants, and other natural surprises. We will explore an easy trail through field and forest less than one mile long. Be prepared for any type of weather. Bring water and snacks if you wish. Meet at the center on Harmony road across from the SRU football stadium. Contact Gene Wilhelm for details [genewilhelm@aol.com](mailto:genewilhelm@aol.com) or 724-794-2434 before October 1.

### **November 5, 2011-Saturday-Lake Arthur's Water Birds**

Do you want to know how to identify all of those look-alike water birds? Here's your chance to differentiate grebes from loons, diving from dabbling ducks, gulls from terns, and plovers from sandpipers with the help of I.D. tips and short-cuts from birding experts. **Note that this field trip is intended for beginning birders who know little or nothing about birds.** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the office of Moraine State Park, off U.S. 422. We will bird for approximately three hours. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and dress for any type of weather. Contact Gene Wilhelm for details [genewilhelm@aol.com](mailto:genewilhelm@aol.com) or phone 724-794-2434 before October 31.

### **December 17, 2011-Saturday-Butler CBC**

Details will follow.

### **January 1, 2012-Sunday-Pleasantville CBC**

Details will follow.



## Activities in Review

### **Spring Sanctuary Tours**

..... Gene Wilhelm

The first Spring Sanctuary tours were a huge success, thanks to the many participants who hosted and/or visited the thirteen sanctuaries. Saturday April 30 seventeen participants were involved with five Lawrence County BAS sanctuaries: Laurel High School's B&B and Wildlife Sanctuaries, the George Sr., Bonnie and George Jr. Casselberry B&B and Wildlife Sanctuaries (two city blocks from the Laurel High School), Barb and George Dean's B&B Sanctuary in New Castle, the Wildlife Sanctuary at the Villa Maria Community north of New Castle, (with John Moreira as guide), and the West Park Wildlife Sanctuary, New Castle, (with Jo Ann McCready, Lawrence

County Conservation District Director as guide).The tour ended with a picnic lunch. Susan Race, Don Eyth, Jean and Jim Barcaskey, Gary Uber, Bob Walzak, and Joanne and Gene Wilhelm were other participants for this sanctuary tour.

Saturday May 21 twenty-one participants were involved with seven Mercer County sanctuaries: Dean Kildoo's Special Purple Martin Sanctuary east of North Liberty, Linda and Henry Lenz's Wildlife Sanctuary in North Liberty (with hostess Sonya Lenz), Carolyn and Paul Rizza's B&B Sanctuary on Brent Road, Larry and Linda Bruno's B&B Sanctuary centered on Springfield Falls, Dave and Vicki Knopp's beautiful B&B on Lake Latonka with an active Osprey nest on the entrance road, and finally Jim and Jean Barcaskey's Wildlife Sanctuary along Black Run southwest of Grove City. After Jim guided us over the 144 acre property, we had a picnic lunch. Barb and George Dean, Gary Uber, Bob Walczak, Joanne and Gene Wilhelm were other participants for this sanctuary tour. Thanks to the thirty-eight participants for all their help. It was delightful and fun to experience the splendid biodiversity of our sanctuary system.

By 2008, BAS had certified 108 sanctuary owners, 41 Wildlife Sanctuaries since 1995 and 67 Bird and Butterfly Sanctuaries since 1997, protecting 4184.078 acres. By 2011, BAS had certified 138 sanctuary owners, 50 Wildlife Sanctuaries since 1995 and 88 Bird and Butterfly Sanctuaries since 1997, protecting 4430.638 acres. In 2010-2011, BAS added 1 Wildlife Sanctuary (50.22 acres) and 4 Bird & Butterfly Sanctuaries (7.50 acres) for a total of 57.72 acres that are included in the 4430.638 acres. Since BAS monitors 8 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) with 38.319 acres plus 4430.638 sanctuary acres, it means that the chapter is responsible for protecting 42,749.638 acres in it's eco-region of Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, and Venango Counties.



**May 14, 2011-Saturday-Butler County PAMC**

Compiler: Gene Wilhelm, Ph. D.

0500 – 1400 hours: Drizzle for the first hour, then almost a steady rain between 0600 – 1400 hours. The weather finally cleared between 1400 – 1700 hours with temperatures ranging between 58 – 67 degrees F. for the day. The steady rain forced most avian migrants down to Earth, as witnessed by observers, with flycatchers, vireos, and warblers feeding furiously near ground level. Once the atmosphere cleared, the sun formed thermals, enticing patient, perched Turkey Vultures and hawks to fly and hunt for food over Moraine State Park.

The sun also stimulated the neotropical birds, consisting of early, mid, and late migrants, to sing. Actually, these avian flocks overtook each other because of an exceptionally long-lasting, cool, and rainy weather pattern in April and May. Its cause was the jet stream dipping farther south than normal at this time of year, forming a high-pressure ridge above the northern tier of states and the Great Lakes. However, this atmospheric blockage certainly resulted in the 2011 PAMC being exceptional for tallying a high number of avian migrants that customarily are recorded separately over a much longer period of time. In fact, it is highly unusual to observe late spring migrants like Bay-breasted and Blackpoll Warblers and Yellow-breasted Chat lingering together with winter visitors like Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and Evening Grosbeak in the middle of May.

By the way, the maxim that lousy weather results in great birding proved true again.

**June 12, 2011-Sunday-Yard Sale**



The yard sale in the parking lot of The Birdwatcher's Store in Slippery Rock was well attended. Thanks to all who helped!

**June 26, 2011-Sunday-BAS Picnic**



We had a beautiful day for our picnic at Oil Creek State Park. Great food and fellowship followed a short bird walk.

## July 9, 2011-Saturday-Butterfly Count

.....Suzanne Butcher



*Curt Lehman, James Monroe, and Nancy Baker*

The ninth BAS sponsored North American Butterfly Association's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Butterfly count was held on July 9th. Known as the Sandy Creek Count, the area covered by the 15 mile diameter circle includes the Troyer gardens in Mercer County on one side and the Polk Wetlands in Venango County on the opposite side.

Count participants included Nancy Baker, Suzanne Butcher (compiler), Joseph Hochstetler, Curt Lehman, James Monroe, Steve Sanford, and 'young' Harvey, Neil, and Samuel Troyer. The first stop began at the Triple Link Road abandoned RR bed of SGL 130 along Sandy Creek and lasted until about 11:30am. Although it was a beautiful if somewhat hot sunny day, it readily became apparent that butterfly numbers and species would be on the low side. Highlights included the first finding of one of our targeted species, the **Broad-winged Skipper** by Harvey Troyer, age seven. We ended our stay here with a species total of 21 which did not include a single Swallowtail and only one Monarch. The group then drove Griffith and Reed Furnace Roads through another area of SGL 130 stopping at several sites where sunshine and milkweed beckoned only a few butterflies. Highlights here did include the finding of a **Harvester** by Curt. The final stop was at the Polk Wetlands of SGL 39. One of the target species, the **Baltimore Checkerspot** was easily found but Bronze Coppers again were not. However, Curt netted a **Black Dash**, another targeted species for this site. After the customary get together at the Jackson Center Dairy Queen where we enjoyed seeing Jim's amazing and beautiful creative photography, the group headed for home about 3p.m. Participants were not limited to documenting the butterflies as Steve who joined our count for the first time also kept a bird checklist which included 46 species, notably Junco and Black-throated Green and Magnolia Warblers. Curt was able to add Mercer County Moths and numerous Dragonflies and Damselflies were on wing. The count: **Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (3), Spicebush Swallowtail (4), Cabbage White (7), Clouded Sulphur (3), Orange Sulphur (4), Harvester (1), Banded Hairstreak(2), Eastern-Tailed Blue (5), Great Spangled Fritillary (23), Meadow Fritillary (1), Pearl Crescent (12), Baltimore Checkerspot (6), Eastern Comma (1), Gray Comma (7), Red Admiral (2), Northern Pearly Eye (1), Appalachian Brown (3), Common Wood- Nymph (10), Monarch (4) 1 egg, Silver-spotted Skipper (8), Wild Indigo Duskywing (4), European Skipper (8), Northern Broken Dash (4), Lit-**

**tle Glassywing (2), Broad-winged Skipper (2), Black Dash (1),Dun Skipper (8).**

**Total Species- 27 (3rd lowest), Total Individuals- 136 (lowest).**

One of the purposes of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Butterfly counts is similar to the NAS Christmas Counts in that species can be tracked and followed over the years to see trends and changes. The habitat in our butterfly count area has remained fairly stable over the past 9 years although the Polk Wetlands is managed with fluctuation of plowing and plantings. The record low numbers this year is probably most related to the wetter and cooler spring which affected first generation broods. Hopefully now with the warmer weather, numbers will be able to rebound.



## Odds and Ends

### Thank You

Thank You to The Birdwatcher's Store in Slippery Rock for donating the cake for our Annual Awards Night.

### Purple Martins

.....Gene Wilhelm

Dean Kildoo, who has been housing Purple Martins for many years, reported that 2010 was the best year ever for this marvelous swallow. A total of 87 pairs made Dean's home their home, with females laying 470 eggs, from which 439 youngsters hatched, and 407 birds fledged. These Purple Martins are special for Dean because they are considered "members of the family." Every early May, when male Purple Martins arrive after their long journey from Brazil, Dean expects at least one or two frigid and rainy nights. So he simply scrambles eggs, seven dozen last year, and serves breakfast on the martins' narrow porches. Such emergency food keeps the martins alive until they can fly again for diurnal airborne insects. Sounds like five-star meals and room service to me.

The first martins left for their traditional overnight roost at Presque Isle State Park on July 28 and the remainder followed on August 15, 2010. Some of Dean's banded martins have been identified at Presque Isle.



*Photo by Joe Dellinger*

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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](mailto:pabirder@verizon.net).

**B&B and Wildlife Sanctuary renewals should be handled by the sanctuary chair in June each year. The \$15.00 or more per sanctuary checks should be made payable to BAS but 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

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