

Upland Informer

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Official Newsletter of the Bartramian Audubon Society

Summer 2013

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.

September 9, 2013-Monday-Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania

Dan Brauning will summarize highlights from the recently published Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania, of which he, Andy Wilson, and Bob Mulvihill were editors. This presentation will address significant changes observed since the first Pennsylvania breeding bird atlas (which he edited), including species gained and lost, other notable changes in distribution, and the conservation value of this work. He will also describe and provide examples of Pennsylvania's innovative point count survey to obtain population density for over half of the species. This will include a discussion of how Bird Atlas projects compliment the annual Breeding Bird Survey for population monitoring, and some analytical methods employed to obtain these results. This is a richly illustrated presentation with many maps and bird photos. Books will be available.



Activities in Review

Annual Awards Night May 13, 2013

President Kathie Goodblood led a short business meeting before the award presentations.

THE HELEN R. FERGUSON FUND SCHOLARSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AT WESTMINSTER COLLEGE



Kerri Duerr, Ph.D., Erin Sullivan and Helen Ferguson

The Helen R. Ferguson Fund Scholarship was presented to Erin Sullivan. Erin is a junior Environmental Science major at Westminster College and a graduate of Aurora High School in Aurora, OH. She is actively engaged in environmental issues on campus through her involvement in Westminster's Sustainability Committee and as a member of the campus's Green AV Team. Erin spearheaded an initiative to get double-sided printing as the default print mode on campus and helped organize new recycling initiatives on campus. In addition to environmental activities, Erin is a Resident Assistant, the Assistant Equipment Circulation Manager at Audio Visual Services, and a member of the cross country and track teams. Erin's career plans involve the conservation of animals and their environment by means of animal care facilities, wildlife conservation areas, public education, and technology. She will be going to Australia in June 2014 where she will work as an overseas volunteer at The Koala Hospital in Port Macquarie.

THE MIKE ALAN STARKER ECOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY



Caleb Sykora-Bodie

The Mike Alan Starker Ecology Scholarship In Environmental Studies at Slippery Rock University was presented to Caleb Sykora-Bodie. Caleb is majoring in Geography-Environmental Studies and Environmental Geosciences-Geology. Political Science was his original major, but after a class in Physical Geology with Dr. Michael Zieg and independent study, he switched to Environmental Geosciences-Geology. Then he added a major in Environmental Studies to better understand the ethical questions of the human use of the earth's natural resources. He plans to attend graduate school and further the connection between his personal enjoyment of the natural world and his interest in hard science.

HOG ISLAND AUDUBON CAMP FOR EDUCATORS SCHOLARSHIP



Shayne Garcia-Bish and Becky Lubold

The 2013 Hog Island Audubon Camp Scholarship was presented to Shayne Garcia-Bish. Each year Bartramian Audubon awards a scholarship to a local teacher to attend “Sharing Nature: An Educator’s Week” at Audubon Camp in Maine on Hog Island. Shayne Garcia-Bish was awarded the scholarship for 2013. Shayne is a science lab teacher in grades K-8 at St. Luke Lutheran School in Cabot, PA. In applying for the scholarship, she explained that, “...one of the great joys of my career is leading children to learn more about the dynamic world around them. In particular, it is rewarding to introduce children to the biomes and habitats that are so incredibly different from the fields and deciduous forests that they have grown up seeing.” Shayne plans to share her Hog Island experience and knowledge with students at her school through integration with the science curriculum, as well as by hosting a presentation for their families. She will also make a presentation to the Bartramian Audubon chapter at a future meeting. We congratulate Shayne and wish her well in her travels to the Maine coast.

AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION BY AN INSTITUTION



Dr. Gene Wilhelm and Dr. Cheryl Norton

In 2009, SRU became the first Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education University to sign the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. In 2012, under the leadership of President Cheryl Norton, SRU submitted its first Climate Action Plan that sets forth a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by the year 2037. To continue focusing on this goal, SRU will work to conserve energy through improving its physical facilities, promoting a sustainable culture on campus, and protecting its natural resources with a number of initiatives including: 1) appointing a senior level, full-time Campus Sustainability Coordinator to harmonize all university leaders engaged in sustainability initiatives and to synergize cam-

pus/community efforts that are undertaken to protect the environment; 2) creating a Land Use Project review process as a proactive approach to land use planning that will promote sustainable development, preserve environmentally sensitive areas, and maximize conservation of natural and educational relevant resources; and 3) initiating a campus grounds GIS mapping project that will document existing natural resources and environmental areas such as Audubon wildlife sanctuaries, streams, wetlands, “no-mow” riparian buffer zones, old growth forests, and sustainable educational trails; among others. Since 2005, SRU has reduced net greenhouse emissions by 25% or 12,600 metric tons CO₂. That’s equivalent to preserving 97 acres of U.S. forests from conversion to other uses. Seven Audubon sanctuaries managed by SRU protect 471.96 acres – 151.20 acres on the main campus – ranking it number one in the four-county chapter sanctuary system. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Cheryl J. Norton was selected by the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education April 5, 2012 to serve as the first woman and 16th President of Slippery Rock University. An accomplished scholar and educator, she earned a Bachelor’s Degree with Honors in Physical Education and Recreation from Denison University in Granville, Ohio and holds three higher degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York: a Master of Arts in Applied Physiology and both a Master of Education and a Doctor of Education in Applied Physiology. Dr. Norton was named President of Southern Connecticut University in 2004 and served in that position for six years. There too she was the first woman president in the university’s 115-year history.

AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION BY A BUSINESS

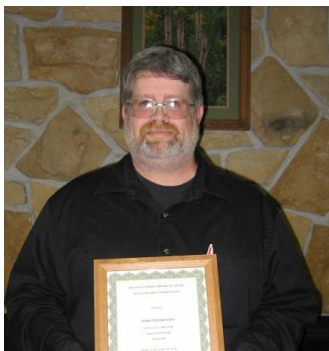


Todd LaCross and Dr. Gene Wilhelm

The award for sustainable Conservation by a business was presented to Todd LaCross, plant manager of the Scrubgrass Generating Plant. The Scrubgrass Generating Plant, located on a 650-acre site in Scrubgrass Township, Venango County, Pennsylvania, produces and sells approximately 85 megawatts of electricity, enough for about 80,000 homes. The facility is designated as a cogeneration plant capable of providing low-pressure steam to other tenants in the area. The plant is fueled by abundant supplies of bituminous waste coal. This once unusable mining by-product was left in huge piles because the technology did not yet exist to burn it cleanly. Today, thanks to advanced generating and environmental control technology, Scrubgrass uses circulating fluidized-bed combustion boilers, an advanced technology for burning waste coal by mixing coal and limestone suspended in a flow of hot air. The limestone combines with sulfur in the waste coal to form calcium sulfate

(gypsum), an inert compound. The process produces an alkaline ash that is used in active and abandoned mine reclamation. The waste coal sites that litter the landscape of western Pennsylvania pose serious threats to water quality and public safety. When rain or snow combines with sulfur in the waste coal it forms acid mine drainage that runs off into nearby streams threatening aquatic life downstream. By removing these waste coal dumps, Scrubgrass is eliminating the source of AMD at the site. The alkaline ash from the power plant is returned to the site to neutralize other acid-bearing materials that could not be used as fuel and to supplement native soils to promote site re-vegetation. Scrubgrass has undertaken a variety of other conservation efforts for which it has received wide recognition from sponsoring the reintroduction of otter to the Allegheny River, funding for educational kiosks along the Allegheny River, designating 350 acres as an Audubon wildlife sanctuary, to receiving the 2000 Three Rivers Environmental Stewardship Award, a the 2000 Governors Award for Environmental Excellence for the Reclamation of the former Leechburg Mine site in Armstrong County, and the 2005 Governors Award for reclamation of the Benjamin Mine site in Clearfield County, among many other conservation actions. Todd LaCross is the current Plant Manager of the Scrubgrass Generating Plant. He was born in Portsmouth, Virginia, married his high school sweetheart, Carol, and has two daughters Valorie and Sarah. Todd served in the U.S. Navy 1982-1993 as a nuclear power plant reactor operator/technician and later became instructor in the Naval Nuclear Power School. While in the Navy, he attended night school, graduating from Columbia College of Missouri in 1991 with a B.S. degree in Business Administration. After starting a waste wood power plant in Cadillac, Michigan, he worked for PG&E Generating waste wood plant in Florida, then moved to Scrubgrass Generating in 1999 where he became Instrumentation and Controls Technician. Since then, Todd has progressed in management from Maintenance Supervisor, to Operations and Maintenance Manager, to Plant Manager. Scrubgrass became the sixth BAS wildlife sanctuary in 1998 and has graciously supported Audubon annually since then.

AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSERVATION BY AN INDIVIDUAL



Todd Stephenson

Melanie Stephenson Petridis and Todd Stephenson are a sister and brother artistic team that has helped Audubon by constructing and painting nearly 185 wooden sanctuary signs for more than 10 consecutive years. Melanie has pursued artistic expressions since early childhood and is widely known for her realistic semi-impressionistic style with the rich diversity of life forms in nature being her subjects. A mother of two grown boys, she is the current

author of a book titled *Destiny of an Artist*. Todd has not only helped Audubon with his woodwork expertise but also has devoted his adult life to scouting. Since 1974, when he joined the organization as a scout, Todd gradually became more involved with scouting “because it was oriented to the outdoors where I love to be.” He diligently earned the Eagle Badge in 1979, then later was elected to the prestigious scout honor society – Order of the Arrow – to eventually become the current Scoutmaster of Troop #380 that is located in Harrisville, Pennsylvania. Audubon is indeed fortunate to have these two talented individuals in our chapter who have contributed such outstanding workmanship that has been praised by both chapter members and the public alike as the hallmark logos of the Bartramian Audubon Society.

2013 SANCTUARIES



*Lower Row: Ken Bennett, Joseph Normand, Jennifer Normand, Tom Pierotti, Lynn Pierotti, Cindi Dillon, Judy Hughes
Upper Row: Jen Smith (Brittanie’s Mom), Lou Ropperti, Ruth Ropperti, Dennis Martsolf, Carol Chmielewski, George Force, James Hughes*

Vice President Jeff Hall presented our new sanctuary owners with their signs and certificates. Wildlife Sanctuary owners Joseph and Jennifer Norman and Sara and Mike Kramer (accepted by Sara’s father, Ken Bennett) were recognized. Bird and Butterfly Sanctuary owners recognized were James and Judy Hughes, Carol Chmielewski, Tom and Lynn Pierotti, Ruth and Lou Ropperti, Sara and Mike Kramer (Ken Bennett accepting), Jennifer and Anthony Kaper (not present), Brittanie Smith (accepted by her mother, Jen Smith), Dennis Martsolf, and Cindi Dillon and George Force.

BARTRAMIAN AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 315
SLIPPERY ROCK, PA 16057

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Paper-Free Newsletter

The Upland Informer is now available online. It can be viewed at our website www.bartramianaudubon.org by clicking on the newsletter link and then clicking on the issue you wish to view. The newsletter is in the PDF format, so you must have a PDF program on your computer. Read only programs are available free at Adobe.com and other sites. Bartramian Audubon Society would like to encourage its members to begin to receive the Upland Informer online. As each newsletter is published, members who have elected to do this will receive an email informing them that the next issue is now available online, and they can then view it at their leisure. For the Bartramian Audubon Society, this will mean a savings both in paper costs and postage costs. For our environment it will mean less paper and less fuel usage in delivery. To enroll in this program, please email our Membership Chair, Russ States at pabirder@verizon.net.



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 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

Name

Address

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please send this form with payment to

National Audubon Society
Membership Data Center
PO Box 422250
Palm Coast, FL32142-2250

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