



Upland Informer

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Spring 2016

Editor- Nancy Baker

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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, 2016-Monday-Hummingbird Myths Explained
Can hummingbirds fly backwards? Do they ‘hitch’ a ride on the backs of other birds? Hummingbirds are remarkable animals that can do many astonishing things, but not every hummingbird ‘fact’ you’ve heard is true. Learn more about what these tiny winged creatures can and cannot do from Audubon Pennsylvania’s Judith Acker at the March Bartramian Audubon Society meeting. Judith will also introduce a fun new monitoring program called “Hummingbirds at Home” which utilizes an app on your smart phone to report hummingbird sightings and nectar sources. In addition, her talk will include tips for attracting hummingbirds to your yard—including what native plants they prefer—as well as information about feeders, food and ways to ensure your yard is a safe and nutritious haven for hummingbirds. Judith Acker’s work as Audubon Pennsylvania’s Outreach Project Coordinator includes in-school programming for children as well as adults and public education. She is the author of *Pennsylvania Native Plants of the French Creek Watershed: Culture and Use Guide*, and works with western Pennsylvania nurseries, greenhouses, and landscapers to locate sources for those native species.

April 11, 2016-Monday-Forestry For the Birds-How to Help the Birds of our Forests

Pennsylvania is home to significant proportions of the global populations of Wood Thrushes and Scarlet Tanagers. Our forests are the core of their breeding range. Because these birds are still common in our region, we have the opportunity to protect and enhance their breeding habitat now before they become threatened or endangered. Many other birds, from warblers and vireos to woodpeckers and grouse, also rely on our woodlands as part of the territory in which they raise their young and sustain their species. Sarah Sargent of Audubon Pennsylvania will explain what can be done to help improve forest habitat for all the wonderful variety of birds that are found in “Penns Woods.” Land managers, woodlot owners, foresters, and anyone who appreciates the sights and sounds of birds in the woods all have ways to contribute. Sarah Sargent is Program Manager for Bird Conservation at Audubon Penn-

sylvania, based out of their Meadville office. She earned her doctorate in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Cornell.

May 9, 2016-Monday-Annual Membership Meeting and Awards Night

The Bartramian Audubon Society will be honoring our new Sanctuary members, awarding scholarships, and electing officers at our annual membership meeting and awards night. Join us for an evening of recognition and refreshments.



Upcoming Activities

May 7, 2016 – Saturday – Bird Walk at Buttermilk Hill Nature Sanctuary

Join us at 8:00 a.m. to look for early spring migrants in Venango County. Dress in layers and wear sturdy shoes. Beginners are welcome. Everyone is welcome to bring a bag lunch and stay to eat, while watching birds from the deck. For directions contact Kathie at larkwren@hotmail.com or 814-432-4496.

June, 2016 – Annual Picnic-Date To Be Announced

Lake Wilhelm in Maurice K. Goddard State Park will be the site of this year’s annual picnic. Bring a dish to share and your own place setting. We will provide the hot dogs and drinks. Check our website in the future for details.



Activities in Review

December 19, 2015-Butler Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

Mary Alice Koeneke and Glenn Koppel, Compilers

The 2015 Butler CBC was held on one of the few cold, breezy days of December in our El Nino-influenced winter. Despite the cold, wind, and lightly falling snow, participants managed to find 79 species (plus Gull sp.); four higher than the 2014 count and much higher than the 50-year average of 67 species. The total number of individuals tallied was 8,129 and 7 unidentified gulls (Gull sp.). Temperatures recorded by compilers ranged between 23F and 34F. Lake Arthur within Moraine State Park and other local streams, creeks, and ponds were open; however, the mild winter weather seemed to keep most waterfowl species from the region and numbers of individuals were lower than average. Of the 11 species of waterfowl observed, only Canada Goose (712) and Gadwall (92) were found in higher than average numbers. Diving ducks in particular were conspicuously absent (Bufflehead) or found in low numbers (Ruddy Duck 21; 50-year average is 113). Mute Swans (2) were found for only the second time in the 50-year history of the Butler CBC. Two species were found in all-time high numbers: Wild Turkey (181, 50-year avg. 37; 143 in 2014) and Bald Eagle (13; 6 in 2014). The previous high count for Bald Eagles was 8 in 2008. An average representation by owls: Eastern Screech (5), Great Horned (3) and

Barred (2) owls and one Northern Saw-whet Owl were found during owling efforts by two teams and during regular field counts. Only one Red-breasted Nuthatch was found for the entire count by a lucky field team (5 is the 50-yr. avg.). Undoubtedly the most exciting find of the count was a **Blue-winged Warbler** located on the Sunken Garden Trail at Moraine State Park by the new compilers of the Butler CBC! A Blue-winged Warbler was observed on the same trail on November 22, 2015 by another birdwatcher. The warbler, which was the only warbler species found on the count, foraged constantly in the leaf litter and detritus and it is hoped that it continues to find food to make it through the winter! Nine sparrow species were identified during the 2015 CBC. Field Sparrow 3, (50-year avg. 3) were average in number of individuals; the remaining species were all found in lower numbers than



northern finch species during the 2015 Butler CBC.

The Birds: Canada Goose-712, Mute Swan-2, Gadwall-92, Mallard-143, American Wigeon-3, Ring-necked Duck-7, Greater Scaup-1, Lesser Scaup-5, Hooded Merganser-9, Red-breasted Merganser-1, Ruddy Duck-21, Wild Turkey-181, Pied-billed Grebe-9, Horned Grebe-3, Double-crested Cormorant-6, Great Blue Heron-1, Bald Eagle-13, Northern Harrier-4, Sharp-shinned Hawk-4, Cooper's Hawk-5, Red-shouldered Hawk-4, Red-tailed Hawk-27, American Coot-350, American Kestrel-16, Gull sp.-7, Bonaparte's Gull-19, Ring-billed Gull-294, Herring Gull-1, Rock Pigeon-379, Mourning Dove-315, Eastern Screech Owl-5, Great Horned Owl-3, Barred Owl-2, Northern Saw-whet Owl-1, Belted Kingfisher-3, Red-headed Woodpecker-5, Red-bellied Woodpecker-45, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker-5, Downy Woodpecker-84, Hairy Woodpecker-47, Northern Flicker-2, Pileated Woodpecker-14, Blue Jay-149, American Crow-365, Common Raven-1, Horned Lark-74, Black-capped Chickadee-241, Tufted Titmouse-124, White-breasted Nuthatch-80, Red-breasted Nuthatch-1, Brown Creeper-9, Carolina Wren-6, Winter Wren-2, Golden-crowned Kinglet-46, Eastern Bluebird-72, Hermit Thrush-1, American Robin-677, Gray Catbird-1, Northern Mockingbird-6, European Starling-1417, Cedar Waxwing-141, Blue-winged Warbler-1, American Tree Sparrow-83, Chipping Sparrow-1, Field Sparrow-3, Fox Sparrow-3, Song Sparrow-16, Swamp Sparrow-1, White-throated Sparrow-29, White-crowned Sparrow-1, Dark-eyed Junco-367, Northern Cardinal-156, Red-winged Blackbird-279, Common Grackle-333, Brown-headed Cowbird-31, Purple Finch-1, House Finch-97, Pine Siskin-10, American Goldfinch-127, and House Sparrow-334. Count Week birds (species found between 16-22 December within the 15-mile diameter circle of the Butler CBC included: Tundra Swan-36, Red-throated Loon-1, Black Scoter-1, all report-

ed from Lake Arthur, Moraine State Park. *Total Species: 79+3 Count Week; Total Individuals: 8,129 plus 7 Gull sp.*

Participation Summary: 42 in 14 parties totaling 17 hours and 15 miles on foot; 48 hours and 413 miles by car; 4 hours and 3 miles owling; and 16 observers at feeders and 46 hours.

The Observers-Including their years () of participation: Dave Adams(6), Rayanne Aiken (2), Betty Antal (6), Jonathan Avril (1), Nancy Baker (14), Brendyn Baptiste (2), Beverly Barnett (8), Kenneth Bennett (1), Grace Bickert (4), Steve Bickel (10), Adeline and Jennifer Birkes (1), Marcia and Larry Brown (6), Suzanne Butcher (31), Gene Butcher (22), Ruth Crawford (33), Dave Darney (20), Debra Darney (21), Charles and Sharon Davis (17), Barb Dean (20), Kathie Goodblood (5), James Gray (1), Margaret and Roger Higbee (11), Debbie Kalbfleisch (3), Mary Alice Koeneke (2), Glenn Koppel (2), Robert, Dixie, and Bob Lipnichan (1), Becky Lubold (4), Robert Madjaric (13), Daniel and Joshua McCoy (1), Oscar Miller (1), David Neely (1), Richard Nugent (10), Cathy Setzer (9), Mark Smith (1), Terry Steele (1), John Stehle (15), Mark Swansiger (18), Sandee Swansiger (17), Stephanie Taylor (1), Christy Tichy (7), Linda Wagner (15), Robert Walczak (1), Barb Wiles (2), Joanne Wilhelm (22), Gene Wilhelm (34), Dave Zell (2). We would like to thank ALL of the participants for giving their time during a busy holiday season to make the Butler CBC a success especially the Butler Outdoor Club (John Stehle); The Bird Watchers Store in Slippery Rock (Cathy Setzer), and the Jennings Environmental Center (Becky Lubold) who promote the Butler CBC as an activity within their venues. Suzanne Butcher has been an outstanding mentor and teacher since early 2015 helping to prepare us for completing our first compilation for the Butler CBC. Without Suzanne's willingness to provide the history, context, and knowledge of the Butler CBC and answering myriads of questions by phone, e-mail, and in person, we would have had a very difficult job. We hope you are all looking forward to the Butler CBC in 2016-stay tuned!

January 3, 2016-Sunday-50th Pleasantville CBC

The Birds:

Canada Goose-270, Tundra Swan-60, American Black Duck-63, Mallard-78, Common Merganser-54, Ruffed Grouse-6, Wild Turkey-19, **Common Loon-1**, Great Blue Heron-1, Sharp-shinned Hawk-3, Cooper's Hawk-3, Bald Eagle-21, **Red-shouldered Hawk-2**, Red-tailed Hawk-42, Rock Pigeon-4, Mourning Dove-244, Eastern Screech Owl-5, Barred Owl-3, Belted Kingfisher-6, Red-bellied Woodpecker-33, Downy Woodpecker-50, Hairy Woodpecker-17, Pileated Woodpecker-15, **American Kestrel-1**, Blue Jay-183, American Crow-145, Common Raven-14, Black-capped Chickadee-316, Tufted Titmouse-90, White-breasted Nuthatch-111, Brown Creeper-11, Winter Wren-2, Carolina Wren-4, Golden-crowned Kinglet-86, Eastern Bluebird-7, American Robin-12, European Starling-577, Cedar Waxwing-36, **Yellow-rumped Warbler-1**, American Tree Sparrow-101, Song Sparrow-4, White-

throated Sparrow-20, Dark-eyed Junco-502, Northern Cardinal-104, **Red-winged Blackbird-1**, House Finch-21, Purple Finch-2, Pine Siskin-293, American Goldfinch-124, House Sparrow-293.

Total 50 Species 3990 Individuals (highest ever)
Bold number indicates High count for that species. Bold species indicated new or unusual species for the count. Notable species –Common Loon, Red-Shouldered Hawk, American Kestrel, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-Winged Blackbird. Highest number ever for: Mallard, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Common Raven (ties), Golden-crowned Kinglet, European Starling, House Sparrow. 2nd highest numbers for ; Tundra Swan, Sharp-shinned Hawk (ties), Cooper’s Hawk (ties), Barred Owl (ties), Hairy Woodpecker (ties), Brown Creeper, Pine Siskin. Statistics: Eight species have been seen all fifty years, eight species have been seen forty-nine of fifty years, and sixteen species have only been seen on one count (none of which we had this year). Jan 3, 2016: 3:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Temp. 29-32F; snow cover-dusting. Still and moving waters open; wind 0-10m.p.h; clear skies until 5:00 a.m, then overcast with drizzle/sleet starting at 4:00 p.m. Observers: 23 in field in 10 parties (the most we have ever had in the field). Time/distance: 67.25 total party hours; 409.5 total party miles; including 23 hours and 38.5 miles on foot and 44.25 hours and 371 miles by car. Plus 5 hours and 7.25 miles owling. **Thanks to all who participated in the count this year. Hope to see you again next year.** Russ States, Compiler



Education News

Scholarship Winners Offer Presentations at December Meeting

At Bartramian Audubon’s December meeting, presentations were given by two scholarship awardees who attended Audubon Camp on Hog Island in Maine during the summer of 2015. Brendyn Baptiste, a Moniteau High School student, attended the “Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens” session through a scholarship funded by Gene and Joanne Wilhelm. He enthusiastically related his experiences, bird sightings and stories, and even created a “Match That Habitat” game based on what he had learned. Denise Chybrzynski, a fourth grade teacher at South Butler Intermediate Elementary School attended “Sharing Nature: An Educator’s Week” via a chapter – funded scholarship. In her presentation, she noted various ways she has benefitted from her experience and shared it with her students.

Hog Island Teacher Scholarship Deadline February 29. Apply NOW!

Although the application for teen scholarships for 2016 has ended, teachers in Butler, Lawrence, Mercer and Venango Counties can still apply for a scholarship to attend the “Sharing Nature: An Educator’s Week” session of Audubon Camp on Hog Island. Scheduled for July 17-22, 2016, this session aims to inspire and empower both science and non-science teachers with practical approaches for integrating environmental education into their classes, and for engaging both children and adults with nature. See <http://hogisland.audubon.org/hog->

[island-programs](#) for more information about the camp. Applications for this scholarship will be accepted until February 29, 2016. The application form is available on our website www.bartramianaudubon.org or by contacting the chapter’s Education Chair at 814-330-2550 or watersinger2@yahoo.com.

College/University Scholarships: Each year the chapter also awards two scholarships to deserving local college students in the field of Environmental Studies. The **Mike Alan Starker Environmental Studies Scholarship** is awarded to an undergraduate student at Slippery Rock University. Students apply in the spring of the year through the Department of Geography, Geology, and the Environment. The **Helen R. Ferguson Fund Scholarship for Environmental Studies** is awarded to an undergraduate student majoring in environmental science at Westminster College who has demonstrated excellence in the areas of environmental science and education. The awardee is selected by a faculty committee who oversees the environmental science major. For more information contact the appropriate university departments.

Audubon Adventures Available for Classroom Use

Bartramian Audubon sponsors and funds *Audubon Adventures* curriculum materials for students in grades 3-6 in schools in Butler, Lawrence, Mercer and Venango Counties. *Audubon Adventures* is available in digital subscription format, where teachers can access downloadable and interactive content for students, plus teacher resources, a large, printed poster and e-newsletter. Printed sets of student magazines also are available, as an alternative to the online subscription.

Audubon Adventures materials include standards-based content related to birds, wildlife and their habitats, and can be integrated across multiple subject areas. The theme for 2015-16 is “Action for Planet Earth,” with a focus on protecting Earth’s natural resources. Topics relate to habitats, water resources and energy sources and challenges.

Learn more about *Audubon Adventures* at: (<http://www.audubonadventures.org>). Then contact Becky Lubold, the chapter’s Education Chair, at 814-330-2550 or watersinger2@yahoo.com to arrange to receive the materials.

Upcoming Bird-related Programs at Jennings

Bartramian Audubon Society and Jennings Environmental Education Center collaborate in offering opportunities for learning how individuals can help researchers gather important data about bird population and migration trends, as well as increasing their own birding skills. Coming up on February 13th 9:00 a.m.-noon is a public program that will introduce the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). The session will provide instructions and practice in bird identification, counting at feeders, and entering data. Details and registration at <http://events.dcnr.pa.gov/>, by e-mailing jenningsp@pa.gov, or calling 724-794-6011.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 1st, when Jennings and BAS will offer a program focused on warblers and migration, commemorating the year of the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty. This program is in the planning stages, with details to be announced.

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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 are handled by the sanctuary chair in June each year. The \$15.00 or more per sanctuary checks should be made payable to BAS and mailed to BAS Sanctuary Chair Kathie Goodblood 170 Keith Lane, Franklin, PA 16323

**Bartramian Audubon Society
Associate and Newsletter Application**

Please check below

- _____ \$15.00 BAS Membership fee- includes newsletter
- _____ \$10.00 Electronic Student Membership

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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