

MAKING A DIFFERENCE by
conserving, restoring, and protecting
Pennsylvania's natural ecosystems,
focusing on birds and other wildlife,
for the benefit of humanity and
the earth's biological diversity.

[*The Newsletter from the Pennsylvania State Office of the National Audubon Society*]

IBA Involvement



As part of the
TogetherGreen

program, Audubon Pennsylvania will be offering three volunteer opportunities at Important Bird Areas across the Commonwealth. These events allow community members to get involved in the conservation of vital bird habitats and to interact with Audubon staff, chapter leaders, and others in their community.

Listed below are the events planned for this spring. Please contact the listed staff person for more information and to RSVP.

Kiwanis Lake, York County

May 2009, Date TBD

Volunteers will be helping students from York High School to establish native plants to buffer regions of the city park that hosts nesting egrets and herons.

Contact: Kim Van Fleet at kvanfleet@audubon.org or 717-213-6880 ext. 3 for exact date.

Pymatuning State Park, Crawford County

Saturday, June 6, 2009

Volunteers will install a native plant garden at the classroom building.

Contact: Sarah Sargent at ssargent@audubon.org or 814-232-3300

Sproul State Forest, Centre and Clinton Counties

June 2009, Dates TBD

Volunteers will be carrying out bird monitoring protocols throughout this large region to document breeding bird species and abundance.

Some birding experience required.

Contact: Kim Van Fleet at kvanfleet@audubon.org or 717-213-6880 ext. 3 for exact dates.

STATE PERSPECTIVE

Bird Movements Reveal Global Warming Threat

On February 10, National Audubon Society released a report entitled *Birds and Climate Change—Ecological Disruption in Motion*. In this report, Audubon scientists examined 40 years worth of Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data and uncovered an alarming shift in the winter ranges of more than 300 North American bird species. More specifically, the report revealed that 58 percent of the continent's 305 wintering species shifted significantly north, some by hundreds of miles.

Movement was detected among species of every type, including more than 70 percent of highly adaptable forest and feeder birds. Population shifts among individual species are common, fluctuate, and can have many causes. However, Audubon scientists say the ongoing trend of movement by some 177 species—closely correlated to long-term winter temperature increases—reveals an undeniable link to the changing climate.

Report co-author and Audubon Director of Bird Conservation, Greg Butcher, Ph.D., explains that many birds move great distances to find suitable food and habitat, but questions how far they will be able to move before they run out of habitat, food, or luck.

“The long term picture is not good for many species, and even in the short term, a single harsh winter could have a devastating impact on birds that have moved too far.” Butcher continues, “Birds are showing us how humanity is tipping the

balance of nature and causing ecological disruption in ways we are just beginning to comprehend. Common sense dictates that we act now to curb the causes and impacts of global warming.”

Habitats already under siege from development, energy production, and agricultural expansion will require enhanced protection and restoration to sustain bird populations and to improve overall human health, economic prosperity, and quality of life. Conservation efforts based on forward-looking projections are essential.

To read a copy of the report and to learn more about what you can do to reverse these trends please visit <http://www.audubon.org/bird/bacc>. Audubon is encouraging people to contact their legislators, editors of local newspapers, and other policy makers regarding this matter. More information on how to get involved can be found at the above web site.



REMINDERS

5th Annual Juried Art Show

April 18 – April 26

Local artists will display work in a variety of media. Prizes awarded in various categories. A percentage of all sales of art will benefit JJAC. Please call 610-666-5593 x101 for a prospectus or more information. Admission to the Art Show is FREE.



Visitors during the 2008 Juried Art Show

Selections from the National Audubon Society Collection:

Ornithological Illustrations by Fuertes, Jaques, Peterson, and Others

May 1 - September 6

Late last year, with generous support from the McLean Contributionship, National Audubon Society transferred storage of its art collection to JJAC, designated NAS collection manager since 2006. The exhibition features works by seminal artists such as Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Francis Lee Jaques, and Roger Tory Peterson. JJAC staff intends to rotate exhibited pieces on a regular basis, so repeat visitors will see different works at different times.

Opening Reception will be held Sunday, May 31 from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm.

Call 610-666-5593 x101 for more details.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Is Change Really Good?

By Phil Wallis, *Executive Director*

Climate change—what does it mean to the birds around us? On February 10, 2009 National Audubon Society released a report that provides profound evidence that climate change is having a serious impact on birds and the earth upon which they and we depend (see page 1). Audubon analyzed 40 years of data from the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), the longest-running and most comprehensive wildlife survey in the world, and found that twice as many of the 305 bird species moved north as south (some by hundreds of miles), and twice as many species moved inland as moved coastally. In both cases, birds are following the biological imperative to move into areas with suitable climate—showing us that climate change is having a serious and pervasive impact on our country and the natural world right now.

What are the impacts? Southern birds moving north into new habitat may suffer grave risk from unusually cold winters, as is happening this year to cold-sensitive birds like Carolina wrens. Birds that breed in the north, or at high elevations, have nowhere to go. Many of the millions of shorebirds that come through our region on their annual migrations breed on the Arctic tundra, a habitat that is already being squeezed by intruding forests from the south and rising sea levels that are inundating the low-lying coasts. The billions of birds that breed in the boreal forests of Canada face an equally uncertain future because no one knows if the spruce forests and wetlands themselves can adapt to rapidly warming conditions.

Once again, birds are the “canaries in the coal mine,” the environmental indicators showing us that a massive change is underway. The birds are telling us, very clearly, that we can't waste a minute—the world we share with them is changing in ways we can't easily predict or control. We have to do everything we can to limit future damage by reducing greenhouse emissions now. Please visit Audubon's web site at www.audubon.org/bird/bacc/ to answer the Call To Action. As Pogo the cartoon observed, *“We have found the enemy, and it is us.”*



museum week

April 27-May 3, 2009

PhillyFunGuide.com/MuseumWeek

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS
PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE JEP-AM MUSEUM, VISITOR & PROGRAMS DEPT., PHILADELPHIA

Museum Week • April 27 - May 3, 2009

Greater Philadelphia's museums offer countless opportunities for remembering, discovering, and learning. During Museum Week — **April 27th - May 3rd** — more than fifty regional museums (including the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove) will offer the public a wide variety of special discounts on admission, shopping, and parking. For details on how to redeem the discount at JJAC and other participating sites please visit www.phillyfunguide.com/museumweek.

CELEBRATE OUR INCREDIBLY RICH REGION.
Visit an area museum during Museum Week.

Museum Week is produced in partnership with the American Association of Museums.

A Home for Herons with the York Revolution

By Devon Reeser, *Development Associate*

Celebrate with us on May 27th to create habitat for herons at the York Revolution's Sovereign Bank Stadium in York City! Audubon Day at the Stadium will include tree planting led by York students, rehabilitated eagles



and other birds, a Martin Library art contest, and more. Also, join us from 5:00 pm-9:00 pm that evening at any of the 4 local Isaac's Restaurant & Deli locations for a Community Night—when 25% of all purchases will be donated to the stadium project.

The Sovereign Bank Stadium and its surrounding grounds are within the Kiwanis Lake Rookery Important Bird Area, designated Pennsylvania's 82nd IBA in 2004 for its unique status as Pennsylvania's only rookery for 3 different state endangered heron and egret species (yellow-crowned night heron, black-crowned night heron, and great egret). In partnership with the School District of the city of York, Harley-Davidson, York City Parks and Recreation, the York Revolution, and a growing list of partners, we are building better native habitat – for the birds and the general health of the Codorus Creek watershed – at schools, city parks, and other locations through the Audubon At Home and Important Bird Areas programs.

We invite you, your families, and friends to join us as we celebrate this unique nesting ground with the York Revolution. First pitch with the rival Camden Riversharks is at 11:00 am. Tickets can be purchased at www.yorkrevolution.com, and the Revolution will donate \$4 of the ticket price to Audubon for supporters that type in the special code as follows.

On the York Revolution homepage, click on the “Fundraising Code Access & Info” banner on the upper right of the home page. Then click on the link to “Click Here to Enter Your Fundraising Code.” When prompted, **enter the code birds09** (this code is case sensitive). The Revolution will gladly answer any questions about this ticket purchasing process at 717-801-HITS (4487).

Grassland Management at Mt. Zion/Piney Tract IBA, Clarion County

By Sarah Sargent, *Northwest IBA Coordinator*

Audubon PA was recently awarded two grants to improve grassland bird habitat at Pennsylvania's best known grassland IBA, Mt. Zion/Piney Tract, which is renowned for its population of Henslow's sparrows, an Audubon Red List species. A reclaimed surface mine dating from the early 1980s, the extensive grasslands are slowly being encroached upon by woody plants. Funding from the Wild Resource Conservation Program and a State Wildlife Grant will pay for heavy equipment to remove invasive woody plants as well as field technicians to help monitor birds at the site during the next two breeding seasons.

On January 29, a group of interested partners gathered in Clarion to discuss management possibilities for the site. The group included regional PA Game Commission personnel who manage State Gameland 330 (most of the IBA), several PGC biologists including Dan Brauning, Director of the PGC's Biodiversity Program, many Seneca Rocks Audubon Society members who were instrumental in protecting the area, and researchers from Penn State working on grassland birds on reclaimed mines in western PA.

Participants recalled characteristics of the site they observed in the 1980s, when grassland bird density was higher here, and designed an experimental treatment to bring back these features. The key features thought to be important are exposure of some bare soil, seeding of birdsfoot trefoil to provide food for insects, and breaking up of the dense fescue at ground level. Behavior and nesting success of Henslow's, grasshopper, and savannah sparrows will be closely followed in the experimental area to see how the birds respond to the treatment.

Audubon Pennsylvania is proud to be working with the Wild Birds Unlimited stores in Pennsylvania and Delaware, which are offering this coupon to help you enhance your bird garden...or to help begin your spring birdscaping project! With a mix of native plants and supplemental resources like feeders and nest boxes, your property can be an officially recognized “Bird Habitat.”

<http://pa.audubon.org/habitat>



Excludes sale items. One discount per purchase. Not valid on previous purchases, bird food, optics, gift cards, gift certificates, pet food, or daily necessities. Club memberships. Valid at participating Wild Birds Unlimited PA & DE Stores only. Expires on 05/31/09.



Photo courtesy of Duane Dieffenbach

A Henslow's sparrow at the Mt. Zion/Piney Tract IBA

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Kim Van Fleet, *Central IBA Coordinator*

DAVE GROVE

When birders and others visit the Audubon Hawk Watch at Waggoner's Gap during the fall migration season they're likely to encounter Dave Grove, an Audubon PA volunteer and site compiler for the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) since 1995. Dave first showed up at Waggoner's Gap over 15 years ago and continues to carry on the long-standing tradition of making a visit to Waggoner's Gap enjoyable and educational. On any given day from August 1 through December 31 Dave and the cadre of dedicated site volunteers help enlighten visitors about the history of the Waggoner's Gap Hawk Watch as well as the ecology of the Kittatinny Ridge, raptors, and migration. Dave is readily identified; he's the one sitting or standing at his perch on the rocks, binoculars in hand, clipboard nearby, and facing in the direction of the day's flight. In colder weather Dave's the one bundled up like Ralphie's brother in the movie *A Christmas Story*. When questioned about why he does this day in and day out Dave's answers usually contain any of the following: It's about the contribution of citizen science to better understanding raptor migration and population health, the on-site ambiance and camaraderie, a way for himself and others to connect with nature, the sheer enjoyment of watching a favorite raptor species soar by, and (for many who casually visit the site) the view.



Dave Grove searching for raptors atop Waggoner's Gap

<http://pa.audubon.org>

301 Chestnut Street
Meadville, PA 16335
NORTHWEST FIELD OFFICE

100 Wildwood Way
Harrisburg, PA 17110
717-213-6880
HARRISBURG OFFICE

1201 Pawlings Road
Audubon, PA 19403
610-666-5593
JOHN JAMES AUDUBON CENTER at MILL GROVE



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