



Audubon

PENNSYLVANIA

Connecting **People With Nature**

News from the field....

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Piping Plover Monitoring Project

Last year, Audubon Pennsylvania took over the official monitoring of piping plovers at Presque Isle State Park in Erie County from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), which no longer has the personnel to manage this project. The Great Lakes population of piping plovers, small sand-colored shorebirds that nest and feed along coastal beaches, is federally listed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. One of the 35 designated critical habitat units for them is within



Volunteer training workshop for piping plover monitors at Presque Isle.



Piping plover, photo courtesy Mike Morel/USFWS.

Presque Isle State Park, in Erie County. In early April Sarah Sargent, Audubon Pennsylvania's northwest IBA coordinator, conducted a training workshop for volunteers, who committed to working alongside Audubon staff to count and observe the birds six days a week through April and May. On April 26, the monitors spotted the first piping plover in nearly two years. The bird was banded so we know that she was born in 2007 in Michigan. For more information visit

<http://www.goerie.com/apps/pbcs.dll/articleAID=/20110428/NEWS02/304279873/-1/newssitemap>

<http://www.goerie.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011303309959>

Interns monitoring birds on the Allegheny Front IBA



Cory Ritter ,
Audubon's spring
intern.

We have two interns, Cory Ritter and Francesca Massarotto, who are conducting songbird and raptor surveys in Bedford and Blair counties. Through a grant from the R.K. Mellon Foundation, we partnered with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to hire these two interns to work with Kim Van Fleet, Audubon Pennsylvania's Important Bird Area coordinator for the central region of the state. Cory and Francesca are recording the spring migration of raptors at Dunning Mountain, which is the first ridge east of the Allegheny Front in Pennsylvania's Ridge and Valley Region.

Cory Ritter is from Wisconsin and graduated with a degree in biology from the University of Wisconsin. This spring he has returned for his fourth season as an Audubon intern. Francesca Massarotto traveled across the country for this internship - the California resident recently graduated with degrees in biology and religious studies from the University of California at Riverside. The internship provides them with experience in the field of conservation and wildlife management.



Francesca Massarotto, Audubon's
spring and summer intern.

Audubon expands programs in Norristown



Pre-school students at ACLAMO learn about feathers.

The education staff at the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove are providing programs to students in the Norristown Area School District. Thanks to funding from the REI Foundation, we are able to expand our programs, engaging more students and teachers in nature. This spring we partnered with ACLAMO (Acción Comunal Latinoamericana de Montgomery County) to provide lessons to students enrolled in their programs. ACLAMO is a 30-year-old organization that is the only full-service bilingual (Spanish/English) agency in the county that works with pre-school, elementary and adults in the community.

Our education programs use birds as a portal to teach science, math and environmental studies. Through the study of bird migration, we can cross cultural and geographic boundaries while providing opportunities for children to learn out of doors. The lessons combine science, math, language arts and geography.

This month, elementary schools from Norristown will be bringing their students to the John James Audubon Center for a field trip. Over the summer, we will provide field experiences at the center for the Norristown Area School District's summer enrichment camp.

Read an article about our visit to ACLAMO.

<http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1104016133280-114/Audubon+ACLAMO+program.pdf>

On March 26 and April 16, Audubon Pennsylvania hosted volunteer days in Carpenter's Woods in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park. One hundred students from St. Joseph's University, Temple University, members of the Friends of Carpenter's Wood and others helped remove non-native plants from this important bird habitat. In March, we removed debris, branches and leaves from one of the paths bordering the woods, and removed exotic English ivy and pachysandra from about three acres of the woods. In April, volunteers removed an additional 32 large bags - about 1,500 pounds - of pachysandra, as well as many English ivy, oriental bittersweet and other vines. This work is part of a larger habitat restoration project that is being coordinated by the Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation, with funding from the U.S. Forest Service. Although the USFS is paying contractors to remove more than 1,500 non-native Norway maples from the woods, volunteer help is crucial because the park couldn't afford to pay contractors to do the labor-intensive vine and pachysandra removal. Carpenter's Woods, part of the Fairmount Park Important Bird Area, is one of the premier locations in Philadelphia to observe migratory land birds, and the volunteers' hard work removing non-native vegetation enhanced the quality of the habitat critical to birds and other wildlife.



Volunteers gathering at Carpenter's Woods to help remove non-native plants.

Olivia Bouler received the Art Inspiring Conservation Award at the John James Audubon Center



Olivia signing her new book.

The John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove presented Olivia Bouler with the 2011 Audubon Award for Art Inspiring Conservation on April 30. This award honors an individual who, through their body of achievement or a single seminal work, uses art to communicate the real and intrinsic value of nature, interpret conservation challenges, and inspire humanity to take actions that will protect and preserve birds and other wildlife.

When disaster struck the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010, the world wondered if birds could survive millions of barrels of oil spilling into their habitat. Olivia's concern quickly turned to

action. In a letter to the National Audubon Society, this pre-teen asked if she could use her art to raise money for the recovery efforts. Her partnership with Audubon led to the creation of hundreds of original illustrations that have helped raise nearly \$200,000, turning this sixth-grader from Islip, New York, into a role model for a new generation of environmental heroes. Watch Olivia receive her award at <http://youtu.be/Y-CNDGgajWc>.

Chapter Highlights...

Festival of the Birds - Presque Isle

Presque Isle State Park and Important Bird Area (IBA) is a 3,200-acre sandy peninsula that juts into Lake Erie - an incredible place for bird migration. This IBA is a migrant trap, unparalleled in Pennsylvania. Lake Erie shore acts as a leading line for migrants both in the spring and fall, with 325 species of birds recorded in the park, making it one of the state's most diverse IBAs. Presque Isle Audubon Society successfully offered their annual Festival of the Birds on May 6-8, 2011. This festival attracted more than 100 people from Pennsylvania and surrounding states. Watch the video footage of the festival on http://yourerie.com/fulltext/?nxd_id=172457&shr=addthis



Chapter Assembly



Leigh Altadonna, NAS trustee and member of Wycote Audubon Society.

We held our spring chapter assembly April 8-10 at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Union County, with representation from more than half of the chapters. We started Saturday morning with Phil Wallis, executive director of Audubon Pennsylvania, updating us on National Audubon Society's strategic plan and the role that chapters play in it. He also gave a state of the report of Audubon Pennsylvania. During the afternoon, we had informative presentations on energy issues by Ginny Kreitler with National Audubon Society, Kim Van Fleet with Audubon Pennsylvania and Margaret Brittingham from Penn State University. The presentations were followed by breakout sessions focusing on education and bird conservation. Audubon Pennsylvania extends a particular thank you to Paul Zeph, president of Appalachian Audubon, for playing a major role in coordinating this event; and to

Seven Mountains Audubon Society for co-hosting the assembly and leading the field trips. As one chapter

member said, their highlight was being able "to interact with other chapters and Audubon Pennsylvania staff." It was a fun, educational and inspiring gathering. Stay tuned for details on our fall chapter gathering.

New bird checklist for Fairmount Park IBA

Philadelphia's Fairmount Park is a superb site for birdwatching, especially during spring and fall migration. Audubon Pennsylvania's Keith Russell has authored a new checklist detailing the distribution and abundance of birds within the Fairmount Park Important Bird Area, which also includes Benjamin Rush State Park. The checklist includes information about the status of 231 regularly occurring species in the city's park system, and highlights the portions of the park that are likely to host each species. To view the checklist visit <http://pa.audubon.org>

Calendar of Events

John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove:

For more information call
(610) 666-5593 or visit
<http://pa.audubon.org>

Birding By Canoe
Saturday, May 28
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Join us on a float down the Perkiomen Creek while watching birds and other wildlife. Canoes, paddles and lifevests are provided. The program will begin with an introduction to paddling. Space is limited so pre-registration is required. Must be 6 or older. Fee of \$8 members and \$10 nonmembers. For more information call (610) 666 5593.

Bat Night
Friday, July 22, 7:30 p.m.

Enter the nocturnal world of bats through an exciting program that gets you up close to these amazing mammals. The threats to bats disappearing is real, and we're seeing it happen at the center. Learn more about white-nose syndrome, its causes and what scientists are doing about it. For more information call (610) 666 5593.

Young Naturalist Series

Fridays, May 27, June 24, August 19; 1 -2 p.m.

This nature-based series is designed for children ages 3-5. Come learn about insects, amphibians, mammals and birds. Free for members, \$5 nonmembers per program or \$10 for the series. Pre-registration is required, please call (610) 666 5593.

In the news...

Audubon At Home in Publix Greenway Market.

<http://www.publix.com/wellness/greenwise/feature/Article.do?id=3341&childId=3794>

Audubon At Home

<http://mtairy.patch.com/articles/making-your-urban-garden-into-a-wildlife-refuge>

Bird Town

http://www.phoenixvillenews.com/articles/2011/04/23/news/doc4db18c3e6a76e9_27006808.txt

Hearing on offshore wind farms (Erie)

<http://www.goerie.com/apps/pbcs.dll/articleAID=/20110315/NEWS02/303159948/-1/NEWSITEMAP>