



THE DRUMMER



www.senecarocksaudubon.org

September/October 2017

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Raptors and More!

Abby Hileman

September 13 Program

Abby Hileman will be presenting our September program. She is a recent recipient of a scholarship that allowed her to go to Audubon's Hog Island in Maine during Educator's Week. She is a native of Clarion, PA, and currently resides near State College, PA. Abby discovered her love for birds at age six, during a bird banding fieldtrip with the Seneca Rocks Audubon Society.

Abby is currently the Raptor Center Intern at Penn State's Shaver's Creek Environmental Center. Before coming to Shaver's Creek, Abby graduated from Allegheny College in Meadville, PA with a B.S. in Biology and Environmental Science. While in college, she was a work-student for three years at the Tamarack Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center, which is where her passion for raptors and educating the public really took flight. During her time at Allegheny, Abby also did research with Hooded Warblers, raptors, and salamanders.

After college, she began as an Environmental Education Intern at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center for two seasons, and then became the Raptor Center Intern. In her current role at Shaver's Creek, Abby helps to oversee the care and management of eighteen birds of prey and twenty-two herps (reptiles and amphibians), while educating the public about the important roles our native species have in the environment. Shaver's Creek Environmental Center also partners with Hawk Mountain in the Farmland Raptor Project, which is a citizen science project helping to involve landowners in the conservation of the

American Kestrel, Barn Owl, Northern Harrier, and the Short-Eared Owl. Hummingbirds.

Join us on September 13 to meet Abby and learn of her work with raptors!



Adventures of A-aviary Busy Ornithologist!

Bob Mulvihill

October 11 Program

In this presentation, National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill will try to convey what happens in a typical year of a very busy ornithologist! From January through December, there are always opportunities for observing and studying birds, and for sharing those opportunities with interested people of all ages! From banding Snowy Owls and wintering hummingbirds, to studying and observing the spring migration of warblers, to conducting

citizen-science research on backyard bird survival, to tracking breeding birds from their nesting grounds to their wintering grounds and back again, to monitoring the migrations of Northern Saw-whet Owls through an urban landscape, a typical year in the life of this western PA ornithologist is often full, usually fun, and always rewarding! In this talk, Bob will take you along for a year's worth of his avian adventures in and around Pittsburgh.

Robert S. Mulvihill credits his mother's casual backyard bird feeding hobby for his early interest in bird watching. His family had a cabin near Powdermill Nature Reserve, where at the age of 14 he met its founder, Robert C. Leberman, for the first time. Bob and Bob became and have remained close friends and colleagues for 40+ years.

Bob received his B.S. in Education from the University of Pittsburgh in 1980 and became a full-time bander and education specialist at Powdermill in 1983. He earned an M.S. in Biology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1993. In 2011 Bob joined the staff of the National Aviary.

Bob has conducted long-term field research on several bird species and authored more than thirty peer-reviewed scientific articles, edited volumes on the conservation of Pennsylvania birds, written dozens of popular articles about birds and nature, and given hundreds of talks about birds and bird-banding research throughout the United States, as well as Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Bob served as a regional coordinator and species account author for the first Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania from 1983-1989, and he was the statewide project coordinator and co-editor of the Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in Pennsylvania from 2004-2010. In 2013, Mulvihill brought Neighborhood Nestwatch, a citizen-science project developed by the Smithsonian Institution, to backyard bird-lovers in the Greater Pittsburgh area. He also participates in Project OwlNet, banding Northern Saw-whet Owls at a public park during their migration through western Pennsylvania; he

bands "winter" hummingbirds reported anywhere in western Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

Bob takes pride in having had the opportunity to train and mentor more than a hundred students throughout his career. He has received awards in recognition of his efforts on behalf of bird conservation from the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (W. E. Clyde Todd Award, 2008) and the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (Golden Pileated Award, 2013; Earl Poole Award, 2016).

All of us who love birds are sure to enjoy this program!



How Membership Helps Seneca Rocks

~ Deb Freed

Seneca Rocks Audubon Society (SRAS) is an official chapter of the national Audubon Society. People who join National Audubon are assigned by zip code to a local chapter for an automatic membership in that chapter. Another membership option is chapter membership only where people join a local chapter without national membership. Both memberships help Seneca Rocks.

*Our meetings are held at the
Clarion Free Library, lower level.
Come early to socialize -
programs begin at 6:30 pm.*

The *Drummer* is the newsletter of Seneca Rocks Audubon Society (SRAS), PO Box 148, Clarion, PA 16214. SRAS is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. The *Drummer* is published 4 times per year— September, November, February, and April.

The *Drummer* is available on our website in Adobe pdf and may be read or downloaded from the site –

www.senecarocksaudubon.org.

Members are encouraged to contribute announcements, articles, photos, etc., to Editor Flo McGuire, 609 Ponderosa Lane, Tionesta, PA 16353 (814 755-3672) or email at fmcguire1@verizon.net.

Let's see how these memberships support our chapter. The national organization supports our chapter with a financial share of membership dues based on the zip code of their members. Each year Audubon sends about \$400 for our treasury. Chapter memberships of \$10 go directly to SRAS.

So how does SRAS manage to operate each year? We have additional income streams that include contributions, birdseed sales, nest box and feeder sales, calendar sales, and Birdathon donations.

Two sources of income are designated for specific uses. The Garden Club donation is designated for purchase of nature books that are selected by us and offered to libraries in the county. A donation, in the form of a CD from Margaret Buckwalter, is used for educational scholarships and conservation efforts.

Chapter expenses include a post office box, liability insurance, maintaining our website, program expenses, and some miscellaneous expenses like postage and special projects supporting the library where we meet.

Finances alone do not tell the entire story of how our chapter keeps going. SRAS relies on a core of members. These individuals give a significant amount of time. They draw from personal resources, knowledge and experience to pump life into our chapter and provide educational outreach to the community. Their commitment to SRAS is vital. Thank you.

Finally, we are grateful for the support of members who spread the word about SRAS and attend the programs and events. We invite you to begin the new program year by renewing your national Audubon membership or becoming a chapter member. You'll find a form on our website under the tab "To Join".



Visit us on Facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com/SenecaRocksAudubon>



The Name Game

~Gary Edwards

Did you know:

1. After mating, drake ducks molt; a "sitting duck" has lost its flight feathers and cannot fly.
2. The cuckoo's song "mocks married men," wrote Shakespeare; the husband of an unfaithful wife is a "cuckold."
3. Gullible people swallow anything, including lies, and gulls eat anything, even another's stray chicks.
4. The name "limpkin" refers to the way they walk, seeming to favor one leg.
5. The name "loon" from the Scandinavian "lom," meaning "lame," describes the bird's floppy helplessness on land.
6. Orioles were once thought to cure jaundice.
7. Because they were thought to be fast swallows, swifts were once called "swift swallows." However, they're not related to swallows; their closest relatives are hummingbirds.
8. After an 1893 family trip to Spillville, Iowa, the famous Czech composer, Antonin Dvorak incorporated the song of the scarlet tanager into his String Quartet No.12, nicknamed American quartet.

Source: "100 Birds and How They Got Their Names" by Diana Wells



Indian Cucumber

Wildflower Walk Revisited

~Paulette Colantonio

On May 15, Peggy and Patrick Kearney led a group of Audubon members and guests on a wildflower walk on the Kennerdell Tract in Venango County. The tract comprised of 3,200 acres is part of the larger Clear Creek State Forest located in Venango, Jefferson, and Forest counties. After crossing the Allegheny River using the Kennerdell Bridge, travelers parked in a small area with direct access to the Allegheny River Trail.

The group of naturalists trekked comfortably along the broad River Trail. Skunk cabbage grew on the right side close to the river. Flowers were easily observed on a bank on the left side of the wide path. Jewelweed, Solomon's plume, Solomon's seal, Foam flowers, and Miterwort were some of the first specimens observed. Jack-in-the-pulpit were in great abundance throughout the hike. White sweet violets, Common blue violets, and Spurred violets were recorded. Blue cohosh, Bluets, and Bellwort adorned spaces along the trail. While eyes and cameras were engaged, ears noted singing Black-throated green warbler, Red-eyed vireo, Chickadee, and Scarlet tanager winged visitors.

Next, the hikers journeyed onto the Dennison Run Trail. This trail includes Dennison Run, a pristine stream of high quality water and reproducing native Brook trout. A horse and rider were encountered in

this stream. Around a bend on the trail, a very young fawn was spied lying perfectly camouflaged approximately 18 inches from the path. Wood anemone, Kidney-leaf buttercup, Canada Mayflower, and Mayapples graced the forest floor. A two-tiered Indian cucumber was uncovered in the vegetation. Wild ginger with its reddish flower near the ground beneath broad leaves were discovered, along with several white and red trilliums, still sporting blooms. The leaders of the expedition with much experience on trails in Pennsylvania noted the leaves on the Red trillium in this forest are the largest they have encountered anywhere. In this area near the water, a Scarlet tanager offered many "good looks" to the participants. However, a persistent singing Louisiana waterthrush upstaged all heard and or spotted birds. It sang for several minutes on a dead snag in the sunlight!

In conclusion, the group stopped at the Kennerdell Overlook high above the Allegheny River. It offered a breath-taking view of the river valley. In the 3.5 hours, approximately 30 species of wildflowers were observed and discussed. No one in the group had ever hiked on these two trails, except Peggy and Pat. The group thanked them for the wonderful time, their expertise, and new areas in which to explore flowers and birds.



Our Annual Picnic at Beaver Creek Natural Area was a sunny evening of chatting with friends and enjoying a variety of culinary delights. Mike Leahy is reportedly an expert griller, his hamburgers got rave reviews! Mike also graced the tables with colorful wildflowers from his garden.

We held our raffle for the Great-Horned Owl framed print, and Tabby Shaw was the delighted winner!

A thumbs-up was given to the new location - the shelter is large and bright, and it's a great birding area.

Kirtland's Warbler Research - Abstract Contributed by Ron Montgomery

Nathan Cooper et al., J. Avian Biology, 48, 209 (February 2017); on line, 20 Jan 2017; see News, Science 355, 998 (2017). DOI: 10.1111/jav.01096.

Some ten years ago there was an unconfirmed report of a Kirtland's Warbler at Piney Tract in Clarion County.

Fifty years ago there were probably less than 500 Kirtland's Warblers in their tiny upper Michigan habitat of jack pine. Because of habitat expansion, the current population is estimated at 5000. Only about 40% of these tiny warblers survive the migration to the Bahamas (they winter about 100 mi southeast of Miami).

Researchers put 0.5 gram geolocators on 50 Kirtland's Warblers to determine how they got to the Bahamas and back. One was found to winter in Cuba. In the fall they headed east over Ontario, New York, western Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina to the Atlantic Ocean, then south to the Islands. In the spring they went west to Florida and then north in a wide path to Michigan, with some flying over western Pennsylvania going north also. Clearly they could have been seen in Clarion County, especially in the fall. Each way is 1700 miles; it takes them 16 days.

See video of migration:

<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/03/watch-tiny-gps-map-rare-bird-s-complete-life-cycle>

Programs at Cook Forest State Park

~Dale Luthringer

Saturday, September 9 at 1:00 pm - 'Fire Tower Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars to the Fire Tower for an historical tour of Fire Tower #9 conducted by park volunteers, Kelley & Al Bilotto. Take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower and learn how it

operated. The tower will be open from 100-300pm. (2 hrs)

Saturday, September 23 at 1:00 pm - 'Fire Tower Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars to the Fire Tower for a historical tour of Fire Tower #9 conducted by park volunteers, Kelley & Al Bilotto. Take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower and learn how it operated. The tower will be open from 1:00-3:00 pm. (2 hrs)

Saturday, September 23 at 7:30 pm - 'Cathedral by Candlelight' Walk into the depths of the Forest Cathedral by candlelight. Hike led, sponsored, and refreshments provided by Kalyumet Campground (www.Kalyumet.com) at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom. Bring your flashlights! (1.5 hrs)

Sunday, October 1 at 9:00 am - 'Nominate a "Walk in Penn's Woods"' Join Dave Cole, DCNR service forester, and Stacy Wolbert, PGC wildlife diversity biologist, for a hike in the woods. We will meet at the Log Cabin Environmental Learning Classroom and hike the Liggett Trail & Toms Run Road. This flat trail starts at Forest Road across from the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Center, travels up Toms Run, then circles back down to Toms Run Road, ending where it started for a 2.2-mile round trip. This trail makes a great birding hike and is suitable for all ages. After completing this walk, those interested will follow us up the road to the Sawmill Center for the Arts and hike the Black Bear Trail. This flat, loop trail starts and ends at the Sawmill Center for the Arts. Look for bear claw marks on American beech trees. (3 hrs)

Saturday, October 7 at 1:00 pm - 'Acorn History, Harvesting, and Preparation' Throughout history, acorns have been consumed by humans living on at least four different continents. Once considered the "staff of life" in indigenous cultures, the acorn is generally considered inedible in its raw form, though with proper processing, its gifts are made manifest. This typically involves some variation of drying, shelling, grinding, leaching, and cooking. Join Adam Haritan from LearnYourLand.com at the Fire Tower Parking Lot to learn how to properly gather and process acorns from start to finish. Participants will learn oak tree identification, acorn gathering tips (how to separate the good

from the bad), differences between red and white oak groups (important for processing), several leaching methods, drying and storing methods, nutritional benefits, and more! (2 hrs)

Saturday, October 14 at 1:00 pm - 'Fire Tower Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars to the Fire Tower for an historical tour of Fire Tower #9 conducted by park volunteers, Kelley & Al Bilotto. Take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower and learn how it operated. The tower will be open from 1:00-3:00pm. (2 hrs)

Saturday, October 21 at 8:00 am - 'Woodsy Owl Workday' Have you been looking for a way to get involved with Cook Forest State Park? Please consider joining us for the day to help maintain the park through various work projects. Woodsy Owl and Smokey Bear will be here to help also. Work projects may include invasive species removal, trail maintenance, litter pickup, painting, wood stacking, etc. Free camping Friday and/or Saturday nights will be available for volunteers, with prior notice received by Friday, September 30. If you are planning to join us for the day, please contact the Park Office (814)744-8407 at least two weeks in advance so that we can have a volunteer project lined up for you. Lunch will be provided. (5.5 hrs)

Saturday, October 28 at 1:00 pm - 'Fire Tower Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars to the Fire Tower for an historical tour of Fire Tower #9 conducted by park volunteers, Kelley & Al Bilotto. Take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower and learn how it operated. The tower will be open from 1:00-3:00pm. (2 hrs)

Tuesday, October 31 at 7:00 pm - 'Cathedral by Candlelight' Want to experience something different this year for Halloween instead of the standard "trick-or-treaters"? Walk back in time with us into the depths of the Forest Cathedral with an historical character from the past. Come view the ancient forest as we walk beneath the giants by candlelight. Either a French Marine from the 1750s who saw these massive trees 250 years ago, or a lumberman from the 1800s will be there to guide us. Candy and hot chocolate will be served at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom. Bring your flashlights! (2 hrs)



From Our Newsletter Archives

April 1984...

APRIL MEETING Our next meeting, on Monday, April 9, 1984, at 7:30 p.m., will feature a slide show by Dr. Gilbert Twiest on the "Identification and Natural History of Amphibians". Please note that this meeting will be held in Pierce Auditorium on the C.U.P. campus.

VOTE RESULTS After narrowing the number of choices for a chapter name from 17 to 10 to 3 (Clarion River, Allegheny Heartland, and Seneca Rocks), the 16 voting members present at the March meeting chose "Seneca Rocks Audubon Society" with 9 votes.

NEST BOXES Thanks to Walt Fye and everyone who helped at the nest box building workshop. We sold about a dozen and a half boxes.

May 1984...

MAY AUDUBON MEETING Our next meeting, Monday, May 7, 1984 (note that this is the first Monday of the month, which will allow our student members to participate), promises to be an exciting one. Mr. Walt Pomeroy, Regional Vice-President for N.A.S., will present to us our one-year provisional charter! In addition, he will present a slide show, "From Audubon to Audubon".

ELECTION RESULTS Officers were elected at the April meeting. Candidates proposed by the nominating committee were: President - Gary Edwards; Vice-President - Ralph Costa; Treasurer - Sue Zamzow; Recording Secretary - Lynn Langer. Pete Dalby was nominated from the floor and was also elected. Congratulations to our new officers!

Upcoming Dates & Events

September 13 - Abby Hileman, Raptors and More!

October 11 - Bob Mulvihill, Adventures of A-viary Busy Ornithologist

Mid-August thru Mid-September - Common Nighthawk Watch, Oil City Marina, every evening.

Looking Ahead - Christmas Bird Count, Sunday, December 17

SRAS Leadership Team

Deb Freed	226-4719
Paulette Colantonio	797-2031
Pete Dalby	782-3227
Gary Edwards	676-3011
Janice Horn	226-7367
Mike Leahy	229-1648
Flo McGuire	755-3672
Ron Montgomery	764-6088
Jim Wilson	676-5455



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