



THE DRUMMER

www.senecarocksaudubon.org



February/March 2016

Volume 32, No. 3



Horned Puffin, photo by Jeffrey Hall

The Pribilofs—Alaska’s Puffin Paradise

Jeffrey Hall

February 10 Program

The Pribilofs—Alaska’s Puffin Paradise: From glaciers to grizzlies, from tundra to ptarmigan, the 49th state is full of natural treasures. After a survey of some of the mainland’s highlights, we’ll venture to a tiny island in the Bering Sea. Here, along with the world’s largest breeding colony of fur seals, we’ll find a wealth of nesting seabirds: fulmars, cormorants, kittiwakes, and alcids in abundance, including murre, three species of auklets, and both tufted and horned puffins.

Jeffrey Hall is an active member of Seneca Rocks Audubon Society and is also President of Bartramian Audubon Society. He was the keynote speaker at last year's Foxburg Nature Festival and has previously presented programs to SRAS on topics such as the Galapagos Islands, the Texas Coastal Birding Trail, and winter waterfowl on the Jersey Shore.

Familiar Feathered Friends

~ Deb Freed

A series of programs for beginning & intermediate birders, in lieu of a March meeting.

March – Attend any or all of our Special Series

No Wednesday program March 9

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. 2 topics each night

Tuesdays - Oil City Library

Thursdays – Clarion Library

Tues. & Thurs.

Topics

Dates

3/1 & 3/3

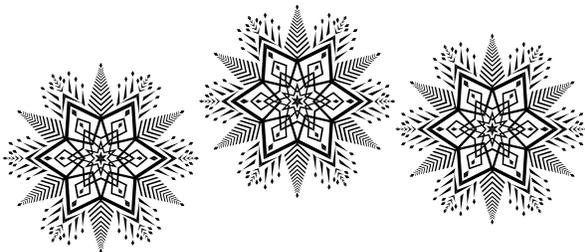
6:30 Winter Feeder Birds
Attracting & Identifying

7:30 Summer Lawn Birds
Bluebirds & local favorites

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

- 3/8 & 3/10 6:30 Migration
Who stays & who leaves?
7:30 Raptors
Vultures, Hawks & Owls
- 3/22 & 3/24 6:30 Common Bird Songs
Who's that singing?
7:30 Our Woodpeckers
Six local birds
- 3/29 & 3/31 6:30 Binoculars
Buying & Using
Bring your own or try ours
7:30 Resource Panel
Helpful stuff for beginners

FREE and open to the public
No registration
*Provided by members of
Seneca Rocks Audubon Society*



A Word about Membership

~ Deb Freed

Membership in either National Audubon or our Seneca Rocks chapter helps to support basic chapter needs like our PO Box, our website, insurance, program expenses and some stamps. We receive a chapter share from National Audubon for each national member living in designated zip codes in our region. This income partially meets our expenses.

Fundraising activities like Birdathon, calendar sales and seed sales provide additional income. We also are fortunate to receive some gifts. These sources

support our public school library book project, habitat conservation at the Piney Tract IBA and educational scholarships.

So, your membership to National Audubon or your chapter membership support what we do. Membership forms are on our website at www.senecarocksaudubon.org. Joining National Audubon enrolls you in both the national organization and the local chapter. Chapter membership only applies locally to Seneca Rocks.

Annual membership in National Audubon is now \$20. Chapter membership is \$10. These rates reflect recent changes. The forms on the Seneca Rocks website should reflect these changes. Note that the national membership form is mailed to National Audubon in New York with checks made payable to National Audubon Society. There is also an on-line membership form at www.audubon.org. Click "Join" and use your credit card. Chapter membership can be paid at any program event or by mailing a check to SRAS, PO Box 148, Clarion, PA. Checks should be made payable to SRAS.

Membership is important and the chapter counts on the income. Ideally, chapter membership should be paid each September, at the start of our program year. Chapter memberships paid in 2016 will be valid until September 2017. Membership information will be available at our monthly programs.

Whether member or visitor we welcome and appreciate your attendance at programs and events.

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.



Northern Gannet photo courtesy of Terry Sohl,
sdakotabirds.com

The Name Game

~ Gary Edwards

The idea for this column came from Ron Montgomery, who is always trying to educate me. Bless his pea-pickin heart -- after all these years, he's still working at it. Ron sent me five bird words that were featured as "a-word-a-day" from www.wordsmith.org/awad. Partly to show him that there's still a snippet of hope, I share them with you. He'll probably puffin up, start raven and generally grouse about it, but, I'll just duck, swallow hard, and scoter away (sometimes I just can't help myself—GE).

gannet Pronunciation: (GAN-it)
 Meaning: *noun*. 1. A large seabird that catches fish by diving from a height. 2. A greedy person.

Etymology: From Old English ganot. Ultimately from the Indo-European root ghans- (goose), which also gave us goose, gosling, gander, and gungel (whatever a gungel is—GE)

snipe Pronunciation: (snyp)
 Meaning: *noun*. 1. Any of various long-billed birds inhabiting marshy areas. 2. A shot from a concealed position.

verb intr. 1. To shoot from a concealed position. 2. To criticize in a harsh and unfair way, especially anonymously.
 Etymology: Probably of Scandinavian origin. The shooting sense comes from the practice

of snipe hunting (I thought you used burlap sacks, not guns—(GE).

dodo Pronunciation: (DOe-doe)
 Meaning: *noun*. 1. An extinct, flightless bird from Mauritius, related to the pigeon but of the size of a turkey (they wouldn't have a chance in downtown Pittsburgh--GE). 2. Someone or something that is old-fashioned, ineffective, or outdated. 3. A stupid person.
 Etymology: From Portuguese doudo/doido (silly, fool).

magpie Pronunciation: (MAG-py)
 Meaning: *noun*. 1. Any of various birds, typically having a long tail and black-and-white plumage; also various other birds that resemble a magpie. 2. A chatterer. 3. A person who indiscriminately collects things, especially things of little value.

Etymology: From Mag (a nickname for Margaret) + pie (magpie), from Latin pica (magpie). The use of the name Mag is from the stereotypical association of women with chattering. Magpies have a rather undeserved reputation for chattering and hoarding, but they are some of the most intelligent animals (the magpies or the women...or both?—GE). Two other words coined after them are pie and pica.

dotterel Pronunciation: (DOT-uh-uhl)
 Meaning: *noun*. 1. Any of various plovers breeding in mountainous areas. 2. Someone who is easily duped (like Ron, who still thinks I can be educated—GE).

Etymology: From dote (to be weak-minded from old age), from Middle English doten (to be foolish) + -rel (diminutive or pejorative [means derogatory—GE] suffix), as in doggere and wastrel. The metaphorical sense of the word derives from the apparently unsuspecting nature of the bird.

*The magpie bragged he was a gannet,
 And campaigned to be prez of the planet.
 All the while he sniped,
 Complained, and griped.
 'Til all ('cept dodos and dotterels) said, "Just
 can it!"*

-Rohn Price, Pennwynne, Pennsylvania



Hooded Mergansers were a highlight on our CBC

29th CBC

~ Gary Edwards

It's getting to be a habit, three straight years with a nice day for the CBC. This year we had 22 vehicle participants and 20 feeder watchers, who scratched out 46 species. Considering how warm December was, it was a job well done. Thanks to all, you're the best!

The total number counted was 6,703— an increase of 1,560 birds, or 30% over last year. That's the highest number in seven years.

A year ago, ten common species were more than 100 individuals below average; this year, only Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, American Tree Sparrow, and House Finch fell into that category.

Last year, Mike Weible saved our 28-year streak of Short-eared Owl sightings when he saw one while hunting at Piney Tract. This year, we had no savior. Despite seeing owls in three locations the week previous, we were shut out. Additional significant misses were Sharp-shinned Hawk (only our 2nd miss), Northern Flicker (our 3rd miss), and Northern Mockingbird (2nd miss in last nine years).

Highlights include:

One Pied-billed Grebe spotted by Mike Leahy, Paulette Colantonio, and Eva Palmer; it's new to the count and brings our total number of species for the 29 years to 98.

One Rusty Blackbird reported by the team of Carole Winslow, Don DeWolf, and Mark Moore; only our third record, and first in 25 years;

Six Hooded Mergansers located at Piney Dam by Janice Horn and Jeff Hall; only our third record and also a high number, the previous being three.

A new high of six Bald Eagles; our first year with more than one.

Feeder watchers added our only Carolina Wren, our only Pine Siskins, and one of our two Red-breasted Nuthatches.

Dinner at Cozumel topped off the day.

Field birders were: Ernie Aharrah, Paulette Colantonio, Pat Conway, Kurt Crosby, Pete Dalby, Don DeWolf, Gary Edwards, Deb Freed, Jeff Hall, Mal Hays, Janice Horn, Ann Hunt, Mike Leahy, Flo McGuire, Jim McGuire, Ron Montgomery, Mark Moore, Larry Towse, Eva Palmer, Fran Williams, Jack Williams, Carole Winslow.

Feeder watchers were: Hendrika Bohlen, Cindy Bonner, Ben and Debbie Call, Jennifer Conner, Bev and Roger Engle, Ben Freed, Layne Giering, Susan Joy, Bill and Henrietta Kodrich, Tony Linnan, Charles Marlin, Jeanie McKinney, Judy Montgomery and Joni Passarelli, Linda Osterberg, Linda Twiest, and Dee Wenner.



Like us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/SenecaRocksAudubon>



Cook Forest photo by Pat Conway

Programs at Cook Forest State Park

~ Dale Luthringer

Wednesday, January 13 at 9:00 am - ***‘Measuring the Giants: Cook & Seneca Pines’*** Cook Forest is home to 12 record-breaking trees. Cook Forest holds the distinction of having the largest known white pine in the state and the second largest known by volume in the entire Northeast, the Seneca Pine. Join us at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a hike to help us re-measure both the Seneca Pine, and its monstrous contender, the Cook Pine. Program is free, but registration required by contacting the Park Office at (814)744-8407. (3 hrs)

Wednesday, January 20 at 9:00 am - ***‘Measuring the Giants: Maple Drive Pine & Corduroy Trail Hemlocks’*** Cook Forest is home to the greatest concentration of tall white pine and large hemlock in Northeast, where over 30 pine have been found in the 160ft class. Please join us at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for an off-trail hike to the seldom visited Maple Drive Old Growth Forest Area to help us re-measure some hidden giants. Program is free, but registration required by contacting the Park Office at (814)744-8407. (3 hrs)

Friday, January 29 at 6:00 pm - ***‘Snowshoe Cook Forest at Night: Fire Tower & Seneca Point’***
Please bring your snowshoes and headlamps and

meet at the Nuthole Cabin, located at the entrance of Ridge Camp Campground, for an evening 3 mile interpretive snowshoe program to the Fire Tower and Seneca Point. Enjoy a seldom seen view from the top of the Fire Tower at night during the winter as well as investigate the lair of the black bear. Learn how to identify animal tracks in the snow as we travel under ancient hemlock and oaks in one of Cook Forest’s premiere old growth forests. If snow conditions aren’t good, we’ll hike instead. Hot chocolate and a luke-warm cabin will be available to warm us up! (3hrs)



Cook Forest, Fire Tower Road, photo by Pat Conway

Saturday, January 30 at 6:00 pm - ***‘Cross Country Ski Cook Forest at Night: Log Cabin Inn-Swinging Bridge’*** Please bring your cross country skis and headlamps and meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a candlelit evening interpretive cross country ski trip within the picturesque Tom’s Run Valley. Learn how to identify animal tracks in the snow as you ski within the old growth forest at the base of the Forest Cathedral, National Natural Landmark. If snow conditions aren’t good, we’ll snowshoe or hike instead. Hot chocolate and a lukewarm cabin will be available to warm us up! (3hrs)





A Pine Siskin might be found on the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time. Since then, more than 100,000 people of all ages and walks of life have joined the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds.

We invite you to participate! Simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, **February 12-15, 2016**. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world!

If you're new to the count, first [register online](#) then enter your checklist. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login.

[Click here for more info on how to get started.](#)

In 2015, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted 5,090 species of birds on more than 147,000 checklists! [See the full 2015 summary.](#)

During the count, you can explore what others are seeing in your area or around the world. Share your bird photos by entering the photo contest, or enjoy images pouring in from across the globe.

Help make the most successful count ever by participating this year!

Then [keep counting throughout the year with eBird](#), which uses the same system as the Great Backyard Bird Count to collect, store, and display data any time, all the time.



Rufous Hummingbird, photo by Flo McGuire

Rufous Hummingbird in Jefferson County

A Rufous Hummingbird visited a private yard in Jefferson County this fall. Bob Mulvihill of the National Aviary was able to capture and band the bird on October 17. He said it had three weeks of molting to do, then it would be ready to continue its migration. It stayed exactly three weeks and one day, leaving on November 8.

Rufous Hummingbirds have the northernmost breeding range of any hummingbird in the world, breeding from southern Alaska through western Canada and into the Pacific Northwest. They winter in southern Mexico, and usually migrate north along the Pacific Coast and south through the Rocky Mountains. Occasionally one will wander east on its migration and delight birders, so it's a good idea to leave your feeder up until Thanksgiving.

Upcoming Dates & Events

February 10 - "The Pribilofs-Alaska's Puffin Paradise" - Jeffrey Hall

February 12-15 - Great Backyard Bird Count

March - See List of Special Programs on Tuesdays & Thursdays

*Looking Ahead - April 2, Conneaut Marsh
May 28, Oil Creek SP Warbler Walk*

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 |



Black-capped Chickadee photo by Meg Kolodick

Hope is the thing with feathers--
That perches in the soul--
And sings the tune without the words--
And never stops--at all--

Emily Dickinson

Seneca Rocks Audubon Society
P.O. Box 148
Clarion, PA 16214