



THE DRUMMER

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September/October 2012

Volume 29, No. 1

Getting in Touch with Birds: Bird Banding in the Name of Science!

September 12 Program by Emily Thomas



Emily with a Yellow-throated Vireo

Emily will share her bird banding experiences, from intense fall migrations to golden eagle banding, and explain why the data collected are important tools in avian conservation.

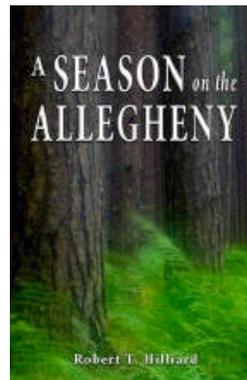
Emily holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Penn State, University Park. She has

been employed as a wildlife biologist by the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station in Irvine, PA since 2005, where she has worked on various research projects on the effects of forestry practices and oil and gas development on songbirds in the Allegheny National Forest. She is also currently an instructor in the wildlife technology program at Penn State, DuBois. Emily has been banding birds since 2005; as a volunteer she gives banding presentations for the public, maintains an American kestrel nestbox trail in Warren County, and maintains a Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) station at Jamestown Audubon Sanctuary.

Join us to "get in touch with birds" at this program.

Timber Management on the Allegheny National Forest

October 17 Program by Robert T. Hilliard



Robert Hilliard, author of the book *A Season on the Allegheny*, will discuss controversies over timber management on the Allegheny National Forest. Mr. Hilliard will highlight the US Forest Service policies that have led to the debate, the various local and national groups involved on both sides, and the impact of

the current management regime on the ecosystem of the Forest. A limited number of copies of *A Season on the Allegheny* will be available for sale at the meeting.

Mr. Hilliard has a degree in biology and has worked nearly 25 years as an environmental scientist. He has written on environmental issues and local history for nearly two decades, beginning at the "Pittsburgh Tribune-Review". He became a contributing editor with "Ohio Valley Outdoors" magazine, where he created the popular column, "In the Public Domain." Mr. Hilliard has also written numerous feature articles for other

Our programs are held at the Clarion Free Library. Come early to socialize - program begins at 6:30 pm.

magazines such as "Pennsylvania Wildlife" and "Pennsylvania Game and Fish".

With the Allegheny National Forest practically in our backyard, this program is sure to be of interest to all.

Let's Go Birding!

YOU'RE INVITED Common Nighthawk Migration Count

~ Gary Edwards

Our annual Common Nighthawk Migration Count at the Oil City Marina is off to a record-breaking start. From August 15-26, we've counted 857 nighthawks. That exceeds the final totals for all but one year, 2009, when we totaled 1242 birds. As usual, the daily counts vary--from no birds being seen on August 17 to 323 counted on the 24th. All but two evenings have produced at least double digits. Historically, peak numbers appear from August 22-September 4.



We can always use more watchers, so, if you're looking for something different to do for a couple of hours, bring a lawn chair and join us at the foot of Wyllis Street from 6:15 to 8:15 any evening between now and at least September 10. When coming into Oil City from Clarion or Fryburg, go to the 2nd traffic light (Petroleum Street), turn left one block to West 1st Street, then turn right on West 1st Street. Wyllis is about a mile from Petroleum St. Watch the street signs, the last three streets before Wyllis are Orange, Innis, and Moran. Turn right on Wyllis & we'll be at the bottom of the hill. There's a parking area to the right. Hope you can make it.

The *Drummer* is the bi-monthly 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.

Hawk Watch Weekend with Mike Leahy

The dates of the "Hawk Watch Weekend" are September 13,14,15,16 & maybe 17. I am hoping to hit it right for the Broad-winged Hawk push. I plan on starting at Waggoner's Gap on Thursday the 13th and then traveling to the area of Hawk Mountain late that afternoon or evening. I'm hoping to stay overnight at the Hawk Mountain B&B on Thursday night and then visiting Hawk Mountain on Friday. On Friday evening we'll head over to Cape May and stay overnight in Cape May and then visit the Cape May Hawk Watch on Saturday. We'll overnight at the same place in Cape May and then play it by ear as to what we'll do on Sunday. If birding is good and the participants are willing, we could bird around Cape May, Stone Harbor and Avalon or we could head up the coast to the Forsythe NWR.

As it is with all of my trips, we will try to be flexible and do and see what the majority of the participants want to do and see. And as always.....We'll eat good.

If you are interested, please contact Mike at: Cell phone - 814-229-1648 or email - mleahy_knox@yahoo.com

Bird Walk at Carole Winslow's

An idea was born at our SRAS picnic, and Carole and Alan Winslow graciously agreed to host a bird walk on their property. It will be Wednesday, September 12, at 8 a.m. This is the day of our September meeting. Rain date for the bird walk will be the next day. We are hoping to see a nice assortment of breeders and fall migrants, and learn what plants will draw more species into our own yards.

Directions: From I-80 at Clarion, exit 62- take Rt 68 west towards Sligo. Follow Rt 68 for 2.5 miles and then bear left onto S. Reidsburg Rd. You will past Zion Baptist Church and follow this road 2.5 miles to Tintown then turn right onto Tintown Rd. towards Curllsville. Follow this road 1.5 miles to Moggey Rd. on the left. Turn left onto Moggey and go 1 mile to Winslows' on the right. The house is tan with stone on front, and is visible before reaching the driveway. There are pine trees along the drive and the house number and sign for Maple Glen is at the end of the driveway. Moggey Rd is a dirt road and rather narrow so it's good to take it rather slow and watch around the bends!

Carole notes - we could walk a lot or a little, but if folks don't want to walk as much, some could take the start of the walk and then come back to the house and sit out on the deck watching hummingbirds and anything in the trees around there. With cherry, chokecherry and spruce trees around the deck, I often see great birds right from there! I thought this might sound nice to anyone that thinks they can't do as much walking since we do have hills here, it's not a flat area at all!

*Reminder to Chapter Members -
Chapter memberships are due annually in
September, \$10 Individual or \$15 Family.*



Savannah Sparrow by Steven D'Amato

Visitors to Piney Tract

~ Gary Edwards

On Friday, June 8, Mike Leahy & I met Scott Stoelson and 15 enthusiastic Roger Tory Peterson Institute Birding Festival participants at B.J.'s Restaurant in Wentling's Corners. The group included congenial festival key-note speaker Greg Miller, one of the subjects of the book and hit movie "The Big Year."

Our visits to Piney Tract and Mt. Airy were outstanding successes with all anticipated species co-operating in the extreme. Participants were treated to interesting anecdotes by Greg Miller in addition to singing Henslow's, Grasshopper, Clay-colored, Savannah, Field, and Song Sparrows; a pair of Northern Harriers; three Upland Sandpipers; and numerous Bobolinks, among the 48 species recorded. Judging from the comments Mike and I received, no one was disappointed and a good time was had by all.

ABA Mid-Atlantic Young Birder Conference September 22, 2012

Event for young birders of all ages and experience

The ABA and Leica Sport Optics have partnered to create a unique birding experience focusing upon young birders and their mentors in the Mid-Atlantic area. Co-sponsored by the Delaware Nature Society and the Delmarva Ornithological Society's youth birders, the Delaware Dunlins, the conference will be held on the beautiful grounds of Ashland Nature Center in Hockessin, Delaware. Striving to bring more young birders together in a rich learning atmosphere, the event will feature a day filled with birding, learning, fun, and friendship.

Bird walks will be led by the ABA and Leica staff around the 242 acre preserve at Ashland, along with concurrent indoor sessions for new and experienced young birders alike, allowing everyone from elementary school through late teens to find things of interest. There will also be special sessions by and for parents, mentors, and club coordinators. We'll also spend part of the day on top of Hawk Watch Hill, where the Ashland Hawk Watch tallies 13,000+ raptors each autumn.

For our keynote presentations, we have ABA's Young Birder of the Year 2012, Marie McGee, and Bill Thompson III, editor of Bird Watcher's Digest and author of *The Young Birder's Guide to Birds of Eastern North America* (all attendees will receive a free copy, thanks to Bill!).

**Ashland Nature Center, Hockessin, Delaware
Saturday, September 22, 2012, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Young Birders - \$15 ABA member, \$25 non-member;
Adults \$25 ABA member, \$35 non-member**

For more information: <http://aba.org/events/MAYBC12/>, email Bill Stewart - bstewart@aba.org or call 800-850-2473 x 240.



Bird Seed Sale

We have again partnered with J&J Feeds for this sale, one of our biggest fund-raisers.

The order form is on page 9.

Don't forget to order your seed!

Programs at Cook Forest

~ Dale Luthringer

Friday, August 31 at 630pm - 'Bat Emergence' Ever watch a colony of bats emerge in the evening to feast on pesky insects? Bring your lawn chairs, ice-tea, and bug repellent to the Park Office to learn about the natural history of bats, dispel some of their myths, and help the park naturalist discover how many bats can actually live in soffit & fascia. (1.5hrs)

Saturday, September 1 at 300pm - 'Cooksburg Petroglyphs' Please meet at the Park Office to take a challenging hike to view historic petroglyphs that were carved by the Indians centuries ago. Come help us as we attempt to possibly identify more petroglyphs in the area. This is a very challenging hike in slippery, wet, and steep terrain. Small children and those with physical ailments are encouraged not to attend. (1.5hrs)

Saturday, September 1 at 800pm - 'Timber Wolves' Please bring your chairs and blankets to the Ridge Camp Park Amphitheater for a science based educational program about timber wolves, conducted by Laura DeYoung, from the Timber Wolf Alliance Speakers Bureau. (1 hr)

Sunday, September 2 at 1130am - 'Fire Tower/Seneca Point Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars and meet at the Fire Tower Parking Lot for a 45 minute historical interpretive tour of the Fire Tower and Seneca Point. Learn about local logging history, observe Indian sign, and take a breathtaking view from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower which will be open until 230pm. (3 hrs)

Saturday, September 15 at 930am - 'Searching for the Giants' Join the park naturalist at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a challenging off-trail interpretive hike as we comb the woods to document tall and exceptional trees of Cook Forest. The Forest Cathedral holds the most remarkable white pine stand in the Northeastern U.S., but don't forget about the monster Eastern hemlock, black cherry, Northern red and white oak in Cook Forest's eight other old growth forest areas. We will be documenting very seldom seen areas of the park. We have the potential to break current height records for a number of Northeastern U.S. trees. We will car-pool to study areas. (3 hrs)

Saturday, September 15 at 100pm - '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 1-3 pm.

Friday, September 21 at 700pm - 'Owl Prowl' Please bring your flashlights and meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for an evening owl prowling. Explore Cook Forest at night for Pennsylvania's owls as we car-pool to owl hotspots in the park. Barred, great horned, screech and saw-whet owls have been known to make an appearance. (3 hrs)

Saturday, September 22 at 930am - 'Searching for the Giants' Join the park naturalist at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a challenging off-trail interpretive hike as we comb the woods to document tall and exceptional trees of Cook Forest. The Forest Cathedral holds the most remarkable white pine stand in the Northeastern U.S., but don't forget about the monster Eastern hemlock, black cherry, Northern red and white oak in Cook Forest's eight other old growth forest areas. We will car-pool to study areas. (3 hrs)

Friday, September 28 at 730pm - 'Night Hike: Cook Trail' Please bring your flashlights and meet at the Cook Trail trailhead along River Road for an evening hike into the Cook Trail Old Growth Area. We'll be passing through CCC Camp SP-2, taking a peak inside the dynamite shack, and listening for wildlife deep inside this seldom visited old growth forest. (2 hrs)

Saturday, September 29 at 1130am - 'Fall Foliage Fire Tower/Seneca Point Historical Tour' Please bring your binoculars and meet at the Fire Tower Parking Lot for a 45 minute historical interpretive tour of the Fire Tower and Seneca Point. Learn about local logging history, observe Indian sign, and take a breathtaking view of the fall foliage from the box at the very top of the Fire Tower which will be open until 230pm. (3 hrs)

Thursday, October 4 at 730pm - 'Spotting Pennsylvania's Elusive White-tail Deer' Please bring your spotlights and meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for an evening driving tour as we car-pool to Cook Forest's white-tail hotspots. Come learn about the natural history of our Commonwealth's state mammal, as we cruise the park searching for this elusive animal.

Friday, October 5 at 730pm - 'Night Fishin' on the Clarion' Did you know that night is often THE best time to fish? The National Wild & Scenic Clarion River contains many different kinds of fish and wildlife that are very active at night. Fish that are often wary during the day come out of their hiding spots at night to feed. Big brownies, catfish, and walleye are often on the prowl at night. Please bring your fishing poles, lanterns, and bait to the Park Office where we'll car-pool to fishing hotspots along the river. Don't forget your chicken livers! (3 hrs)

Hummingbird Contest

Attract a Wintering Hummer, win a prize!!

Western species of hummingbirds migrate through our area in late fall, and researchers are eager to band these birds to learn more about them. Any hummingbird seen from October 15 through November 30 is most likely a western species. If you see one, call Gary Edwards at 814-671-2731 or Mike Leahy at 814-229-1648. They will check it out and call a bander.

(In freezing temps, bring the feeder in at night).

Prizes include 2013 SRAS Calendars and \$25 Gift Certificates to J&J Feeds.

Clarion, Venango, Forest, Jefferson and Armstrong County residents are eligible.

Our chapter awarded scholarships to two teens to Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine this past summer. Daniel Winstead of Indiana and Chase Masters of Clarion both wrote about their experiences - sit back and enjoy!

Hog Island Trip

Part 1

~ Daniel Winstead

This past June, I was given a scholarship to attend the Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens program, sponsored by the National Audubon Society, on Hog Island. It was great! I would like to thank the Seneca Rocks Audubon Society for giving me this scholarship, and Margaret Higbee and Linda Jones for writing my letters of recommendation.

Upon arrival at Hog Island I was greeted by Scott Weidensaul, the author of many books about natural history including, Of a Feather and Living on the Wind. He gave us our bearings and told us where to meet in about two hours. I went to the "Crow's Nest", which is where the teens stayed that week, put my luggage down, got out my binoculars and went birding. I went down to the dock and saw a small black bird fly by with white patches on its wings. One of the leaders stopped and asked what I saw, so I told him about the bird. He told me it was probably a Black Guillemot and gave me the field markings. We went out on to a small rocky ledge and looked out on the water to find it. Then I spotted it again. That was my first lifer of the trip. I met up with some of the other teen birders who were looking at a Northern Parula nest. We took some pictures of the almost ready to fledge chicks and went to a small starting presentation. We all said our names and why we were there, and we were told what the week would be like and some of the things we would be doing. We went and ate a delicious dinner prepared by Chef Janii Laberge in the dining area/kitchen called "The Bridge." Then we went to a presentation about the history of Hog



Atlantic Puffin by Daniel Winstead

Island and Project Puffin by Steve Kress.

Afterwards the teens had a small meeting and played a few Icebreakers. We went back to the Crow's Nest and got ready for tomorrow morning.

At 5:45 AM, we went on a morning bird walk across a small portion of the island. Along the trail we heard Golden-crowned Kinglets and Dark-eyed Juncos singing. In a small bog near the trail we admired the Sundews and Pitcher plants. We went back and had a wonderful breakfast.

Afterwards, we took the boat, the "Snow Goose III" to the mainland and went birding along McCurdy Pond Rd. Some of the highlights were a Pine Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, also a Northern Waterthrush and Canada Warbler in the same bush; we heard a Brown Creeper, Veery and Common Loon as well. Then we went to a marsh owned by Damariscotta River Association and saw Bobolinks, a Pied-billed Grebe, Black-billed

Cuckoos and we heard two Soras, one of which was fifteen feet away and never came out of the brush. We went back to the island and ate lunch. Then we went out on the "Snow Goose III" again and we headed to Wreck Island. On the way, in a small thunderstorm, we saw Harbor Porpoises, Harbor Seals, a Great Cormorant, a Red-breasted Merganser and a Black Scoter. We landed on the island by way of an old cod boat the "Audubon." On the Island we saw American Redstarts and Great Blue Herons perched high on the nests, like sentries. On the way back we saw Common Eiders with their chicks trailing behind. When we got back we had some wonderful mackerel for dinner. Our evening program was "Taking the Sexism out of Birds" with Sara Morris. For the program we brought our field guides and were asked to identify pictures of female/immature female birds. The presentation really emphasized that pattern is more important than color when identifying females. 

(Daniel's article will be continued in our next Drummer)

Hog Island Trip

Short Observations

~ Chase Masters

Watching the Northern Parula Chicks Fledge

While I was walking over to the fish house to get something to read from the Sara Morris Library, I saw a few people gathering in front of a tiny parula nest which was hidden in the moss about ten feet away. I asked what was going on and they said that they were just watching. I took out my binoculars and joined them. Within the next 30 seconds, the parulas fledged. The chicks stood up from their crouched positions in the nests. It was hard to see them all at first, but then one jumped up and peeped his little head out. I could make out the gray feathers on his head. It happened so fast, I couldn't see his eyes behind his yellow beak. I wanted to linger, but my group, the Corvids, was gathering to start an activity. I was very happy to have been lucky enough to see the fledglings just by being in the right place at the right time.

Cruising to Eastern Egg Rock Island

We were headed out to cruise by Eastern Egg Rock Island when it started raining. There were a few birds but most of them flew up out of sight. We saw another group of small birds hovering several miles out in the Atlantic. I asked Scott Weidensaul what they were because it was hard to see them in the rain. He responded that they were Wilson's Storm Petrels flying about a 100 feet out from the boat. He alerted the others so they could observe too. When we finally reached Eastern Egg Rock Island, the skies had cleared. We circled the island in the boat seeing only at first 5-6 puffins. This was the first time I ever saw puffins in their natural setting. They were about the size of a quart of milk only fatter. Their beaks are orange and blue. Their feathers had a distinctive tuxedo look. We realized there were more on the other side of the island. There were also several razorbills just waiting for us to see them. As we circled we saw countless adult puffins. We did not see any chicks because they stay in the burrows. On the way back we saw several arctic and roseate terns as well as laughing

gulls. Then we saw an island covered with seals and a few pesky greater black-backed gulls.

Recording with Lang Elliott

(editor's note: Lang Elliott created, produced, and narrated the bird names on the Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs, in addition to recording most of the songs)

I had to wake up early one morning, at 3:30 a.m, so I could go out recording with Lang Elliott. We carried a little messenger bag with all the equipment we needed. We were going out for the dawn chorus. We had to walk out to the far reaches of Hog Island. On the way, we heard lots and lots of winter wrens and early crows. We had to stand still and scan for the best sound quality. This involved a lot of waiting but our patience paid off with the recordings of bird calls.

Eating High on the Hog (Island)

Normally you think of yogurt and granola as an easy, throw-together breakfast to eat on the run. But with a gourmet chef like Janii on the job, it was a taste treat. The homemade yogurt had a very rich, bold and tart flavor. The granola had freshly dried Maine blueberries, along with raisins and oats, with clover honey to hold all the delicious parts together.

We had a seafood fest featuring soft-shell lobster. Each person had their own lobster. The advantage of the soft-shell was that it made it easier to reach the meat, which was very delicate and quite sweet. Warm drawn butter for dipping was available. Chef Janii also prepared New England clam chowder with special spices. There was also zucchini sautéed in butter and bread. The part of the lobster called tomalley was good when served on corn chips.

For dessert, there was a puffin cake (a yellow cake decorated like a puffin). There were also crème puffins, which were crème puffs with a cookie roll for a head.

Every meal was nutritious and delicious. The meals gave us the energy we needed to run from early morning to late at night, as we explored Hog Island and learned about the wonders of bird camp.



Clarion County - Spring 2012 Quarterly Report by Carole Winslow

Clarion County Locations: Cook Forest (CF), Curllsville (CV), Foxburg (FB), Kahle Lake (KL), Mt. Airy (MA), Mount Zion (Piney Tract IBA/SGL 330) (MZ), Sarah Furnace (SF), Strattanville (ST).

The spring season for 2012 brought a nice mix of birds with some unusual species for the county. A mix of early high temperatures and plenty of rain marked the season, and while some speculated on changes in migration dates, evidence was mixed. Some bird groups were a little earlier while many others remained in the usual time frame for at least the past five years.

Tundra Swans start out the spring list, with large numbers of around 1,300 putting down on KL (shared with Venango Co.) 3/1 (RS, JS). In one of the most unusual sightings for Clarion, not just one but two **Trumpeter Swans** were reported. The first was in New Bethlehem on Redbank Creek, a first year bird wing-tagged J53. This bird appeared 3/13 and continued in the area through at least 5/20 when it was last sighted (RM, GE, DW, AL, CW, CD, MD, et al). This bird was often in the company of an adult **Mute Swan** that is regular in the area. On reporting the banding information to the USGS, it was learned that this individual was a male, born in Cambridge, ON and banded there 11/3/2011. It had been injured in a likely dog attack later in November and though returned to its family after several weeks of rehab, was not with them when they arrived at their wintering site in Burlington later that fall. It's winter home remains a mystery as there were no reports of it until it arrived in Clarion. The second trumpeter was found at KL 4/2 and was an unmarked adult bird that did not linger as it was not refound two days later (GE). For other waterfowl, there were two notable sightings of **Wood Ducks**, with the first being a pair seen at a beaver dam area at MZ 4/13, possibly utilizing a new nest box there (RM). The second was also a pair, seen near Limestone 4/16 checking out tree cavities near a home there (FW). The Allegheny River near FB once again provided a nice selection of migrating ducks starting with **Lesser Scaup**, **Ring-necked Duck**, and **Gadwall** 2/25, then **Northern Pintail**, **Redhead**, **Greater Scaup**, **Bufflehead** and **Common Goldeneye** 3/1 (KC). Also noted here this season were **American Wigeon** 4/21, **Blue-winged Teal** 4/15, as well as **Northern Shoveler**, **Canvasback**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, and b (KC). The other area in the county with regular waterfowl numbers is KL, which on 3/24 showed good numbers of birds, including 500+ **Lesser Scaup**, 5 b, 50 **Bufflehead**, 14 **Long-tailed Ducks** and 50 **Horned Grebes** (JS). **Hooded Mergansers** were seen in pairs in two areas with possible nesting sites. One was 3/5 near Millcreek and also a pair at SGL 63 ponds 3/27 (RM).

A single **Great Egret** was seen at Beaver Creek Wetlands area 4/4 and also a single bird at KL 5/12 (CW). **Great**

Blue Herons continued their successful colony on an island in the Allegheny River near FB with 21 active nests there in early May (KC). A single nest was also found in a new site near Gravel Lick with chicks in the nest there 4/28 (RM, PC, DB). The first **Osprey** of the season was seen 3/1 along the river at FB (KC) and one was also sighted hunting at the pond at CV strips area 4/25, a first for that site (CW). **Bald Eagles** continue to be regular now, with an adult seen at East Brady 3/28 (PW), and the nest along the Clarion River near Sligo active again this year. Two adult birds were present there 4/29 with one young bird seen being fed in the nest (CW). An adult **Northern Harrier** was reported at MZ 4/13, which is a regular nesting site for these birds (RM). The best raptor report is once again **Northern Goshawk**, which was found attempting nesting again in the northern part of the county. On 4/27 an active nest was found but appeared abandoned within several weeks, possibly due to poor location near an active roadway (DB). A pair was later reported near the area 5/26, but no further breeding evidence was found (RS).

Upland Sandpipers once again returned to their regular areas on MA, first seen 5/2 with at least 4 birds and possibly up to 7 (CW). The birds were observed calling and doing flight displays. Two birds continued to be seen in this area, both 5/5 (SS, NT) and again 5/18 (SS, BD).

Wilson's Snipe were heard at the CV strips area at dusk 4/1 winnowing from some of the lower lying marshy areas that have developed with land use changes at this site.

American Woodcock were one of the species with earlier arrivals this year, first heard back at MZ at dusk 3/3, an early date by 5 days (CW). Four were also heard near CV 3/7 (CW) and one near Clarion 3/8 (DF). These birds are commonly heard and seen in spring in the southern part of the county where they take advantage of large areas of suitable overgrown field habitat. For gulls, **Bonaparte's** were first reported back along the Allegheny near FB with 30 there 3/30 (KC) and last sighted from KL 5/12 (CW). A single **Black Tern** was seen at KL 5/26 (MV), and a **Caspian Tern** was present along the Allegheny at FB 4/21 (KC).

A report from the Clarion Co Food and Cover Crew of the PGC for SGL 330 (MZ) of a **Short-eared Owl** near the main parking area there prompted some visits and resulted in the sighting of 2 birds seen at dusk there 3/3 (CW), and 3-4 birds the next evening (RM). On 3/8 a single bird was seen near CV at a regular site there (CW), and the last sighting of spring came from MA 4/5 (CW).

Whip-poor-wills were first heard back and calling 5/1 near East Brady where they are fairly regular in spring (PW). Further north along the Allegheny they were also reported back near FB 5/3 (KC).

Two flycatchers showed up slightly ahead of their usual schedule with both **Acadian Flycatcher** and **Eastern Wood Peewee** back at SF 5/4 where they are regular summer breeders (CW). Near CV, **Least Flycatchers** were once again present throughout the spring starting 5/1 in

an area of overgrown field, streamside with patches of nearby woods. Two pairs were present and nest building was observed with two completed in close proximity and both nests ending up destroyed by predators (CW). Nest materials included lichens and spiderwebs, as well as dandelion seeds. Both nests were placed in the exposed tops of dead apple trees, approx 20 ft up. **Horned Larks** were singing on a hilltop cut corn field from last season at dusk 3/7 near CV, where they have been regular for the last several years (CW). **Tree Swallows** showed up early in larger than usual numbers this year with 35 observed along the river near FB 3/18 (KC). Cold weather and rain led to a unique swallow event along the Allegheny River near FB where large numbers of **Barn, Tree, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were observed 4/21, feeding in large flocks of 50-100 immediately above the water (KC). Another early sighting for the season was that of a single **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** seen near SF 4/2, along with a singing **Winter Wren** (CW). Winter wren had already been reported back for the season 3/20 in their stronghold at CF (CD).

Thrushes appeared in their usual time frames this year with **Wood Thrush** back 4/28 and 3 **Swainson's Thrush** seen near CV 5/8, one observed in song, along with 2 **Veery**, also first of season (CW). **Brown Thrasher** was another species just a little ahead of schedule with one heard back singing 4/3 near CV (CW). A bird not regularly reported for the county was

American Pipit, so a flock of 50+ near KL at a farm field was a welcome addition for the season (ML, GE, PC, JH). A singing male hybrid of the **Brewster's Warbler** type (plumage the same except white on wing instead of yellow) was present near CV 5/10 and through at least the next week, singing a blue-winged warbler song repeatedly as well as responding to playback of that species (CW). On 4/25 in the same location an early male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was present and singing (CW). Two singing **Pine Warblers** were seen at MZ 4/13 in the large number of pine plantings there, and continued at the same site through the end of May, but without further breeding evidence found (RM, CW). The first singing **Worm-eating Warbler** was heard back 5/4 in their now regular site on the wooded hillsides at SF, as well as a **Cerulean Warbler** (CW). Also in this same location **Louisiana Waterthrush** were heard singing in two separate areas along the stream there 4/4, first of the season for these birds (CW). **Kentucky Warblers**, which were not reported for the county last year, were found in their past breeding area along Rider Rd near SF during the PAMC count 5/12 (CW), with a single singing male found. Along this same area of roadside a male **Mourning Warbler** was found 5/20 (SC). Along the Clarion River near Gravel Lick, in areas of deep pine and hemlock with



In those vernal seasons of the year, when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against Nature not to go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth.
~John Milton

thick understory, a singing **Canada Warbler** was found for a first of season during the PAMC 5/12, and refound on territory in the same area 5/30 (CW, RM).

Clay-colored Sparrows were heard back on territory at CV strips a little earlier this year, with a singing male there 5/3 (CW) and 4 birds seen the next day (ST, DW). **Field Sparrows** were evident singing in the numerous overgrown field areas in southern Clarion by 3/17 (CW), while **Savannah Sparrow**, normally the early arriver, was not reported until early May. **Grasshopper Sparrows** are typically a couple weeks behind **Henslow's Sparrow**, but this year 3 singing birds were found along Rankin Rd near CV 4/19 as well as 14+ singing **Henslow's sparrows**, just several days behind the record early arrival of the **Henslow's Sparrows** at MZ 4/14 (RM). Numbers for both

these species appeared average or above through May in their usual reclaimed strip mine sites. The first **Fox Sparrow** was seen back near CV 3/16 and heard singing as well (CW).

Modest numbers were also reported at SGL 63 on 3/27 as well as 50+ **White-throated Sparrows** (RM, GE). A single **Lincoln's Sparrow** was reported for spring, this 5/2 near CV in an area where they are typically found more commonly in fall (CW). The best spring sighting for grassland species was likely the first **Dickcissel** report for the county in some time, seen at the CV strips site, a single male 5/31 (SC, KD). This area has become more overgrown, with one large field now planted to wildflowers and switchgrass which provides more appealing habitat for these birds.

Pine Siskins made their home in ST for some time this spring, staying late into the season but despite observation, no breeding evidence was found for certain. Large pine and spruce plantings provide habitat for these birds as well as feeders. Five birds were regular at feeders through March and April. The birds were singing in April but had stopped by late in the month and became less visible by mid-April. The last male was seen at this site 5/15 and the last female 5/26 (RM). **Purple Finches** made their first spring appearance near CV 3/13 and were singing regularly by 3/16. They continued at this yard with large Norway and blue spruce plantings through the end of May, with a pair present and a male singing daily (CW).

Observers: Carole Winslow, 159 Moggey Rd, Sligo, PA 16255, cjnal@windstream.net, 814-745- 3818, Dave Brinker, Paulette Colantonio, Shawn Collins, Pat Conway, Kurt Crosbie, Karyn Delaney, Corey DeStein, Michael Dreibelbis, Bill Drolsbaugh, Gary Edwards, John Fedak, Deb Freed, Janice Horn, Alex Lamoreaux, Mike Leahy, Deborah McCanna, Ron Montgomery, Mark Moore, Dan Ombalski, Michael Rosengarten, Steve Sanford, Jerry Stanley, Russ States, Randy Stringer, Shannon Thompson, Neil Troyer, Mark Vass, Drew Weber, Fran Williams, Dave Wilton, Alan Winslow, Paul Winslow.

SRAS Blue Seal Bird Seed Sale

This is your opportunity to purchase quality birdseed from our local **Blue Seal** dealer and support the conservation, education and environmental activities of the Seneca Rocks Audubon Society. Blue Seal will offer a 15% discount on bird feeders, suet cages and nyjer sacks when you pick up your order. There are two store locations: J&J Feeds on route 66 midway between Marianne Corners & I-80 and J&J Feeds Brookville on Allegheny Blvd across from the old Agway Store

ORDER BY FRI October 19

PICK-UP from MON Oct 29 to SAT Nov 3

Mail this order form with check (payable to SRAS) to: Seneca Rocks Audubon Society
 c/o Janice Horn
 32 Barber St. Clarion, PA 16214

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ e-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please indicate your pick-up location: Brookville _____ or Shippenville _____

Quantity	Seed Type	Lbs	Unit Price	Total
_____	Nature's Choice - premium mix with corn	40 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Concerto - no corn premium mix	40 lb	\$ 26.00	_____
_____	Songmaker - economic mix	40 lb	\$ 20.00	_____
_____	J & J Blend - most popular	50 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Black Oil Sunflower	50 lb	\$ 29.00	_____
_____	Black Oil Sunflower	25 lb	\$ 18.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - triple cleaned	50 lb	\$ 15.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - triple cleaned	25 lb	\$ 9.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - once cleaned	50 lb	\$ 12.00	_____
_____	Cracked Corn - once cleaned	25 lb	\$ 8.00	_____
_____	Nyjer Seed	50 lb	\$ 44.00	_____
_____	Nyjer Seed	25 lb	\$ 25.00	_____
_____	Suet Cakes		\$ 1.50	_____

Make checks payable to: _____
 Seneca Rocks Audubon Society
 Note NO TAX

Subtotal _____

Donation to Seneca Rocks Audubon _____

Total _____

Dates to Remember:

Evenings until mid-Sept - Nighthawk Watch at Oil City
Sept. 12 - Bird Walk at the Winslows'
Sept. 12 Program - "Getting in Touch with Birds"
Sept. 13-17 - Hawk Watch Weekend
Oct. 15 - Nov. 30 - Hummingbird Contest
Oct. 17 Program - "Timber Management on the ANF"
Oct. 19 - Last day to order Bird Seed
October 29-November 3 - Pick up Bird Seed
Nov. 14 Program - "Get ready to Count: The 113th
Christmas Bird Count"
Dec. 12 Program - Jeff Larkin, Golden-winged Warblers
Dec. 29 - Clarion Christmas Bird Count



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

*Everybody needs beauty as well as bread,
places to play in and pray in,
where nature may heal and cheer and give
strength to body and soul alike.*

-- John Muir

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