



# THE DRUMMER



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May/June 2018

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## **Birding Northern Argentina: Iguazu Falls and the Esteros de Ibera**

**Scott Stoleson**  
*May 9 Program*

Upon seeing Iguazú Falls on the Argentinian/ Brazilian border, Eleanor Roosevelt reportedly exclaimed "My poor Niagara!" Spectacular, awe-inspiring, and incredibly loud, this largest of the world's waterfall complexes has been declared one of the seven Natural Wonders of the World. But its beauty extends well beyond the mist-shrouded falls themselves, as the surrounding network of national and provincial parks on both sides of the border supports one of the largest remnants of South America's endemic-rich Atlantic Coastal Forest biome -- and home to over 500 bird species, including black-fronted piping-guans, surucua

*(continued on page 2)*



## **Monarch Butterflies**

**Kimberly Vensel**  
*June 13 Program*

Monarch butterflies have fascinated scientists and non-scientists for decades. The seemingly-impossible migration they make each fall is probably their greatest mystery. Why do they go to the same location every year? How do they know how to get there? How can they fly that far with those tiny wings?

Kimberly Vensel, aka Butler Butterfly Lady, is a Butler County photographer who also happens to have a passion for the Monarch butterfly. She has been raising Monarchs for eight years and has

*(continued on page 2)*

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

*Birding Northern Argentina, continued*

trogons, and white-shouldered fire-eyes. Yet just a few hours' drive to the Southwest, those forests give way to vast grassy plains and one of the continent's largest marsh complexes in Argentina's Corrientes province, with avian oddities such as rheas, monjitas, and maguaris.



Green-headed Tanager

Scott is the Research Wildlife Biologist with the Forest Service's Northern Research Station in Irvine, PA, and a Research Associate of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Jamestown, NY. His research currently focuses on Cerulean Warbler ecology, post-breeding habitat use, forest raptor conservation, and impacts of the invasive Spotted Winged Drosophila on forest wildlife. He has published over 65 scientific papers and book chapters on avian biology and conservation based on research in Pennsylvania, the western U.S., and Latin America. He serves on the Governing Council of the Association of Field Ornithologists, the boards of the Northern Allegheny Conservation Association and Eastern Bird Banding Association, and the PA Biological Survey's Ornithological Technical Committee. When not working on birds, he enjoys traveling to exotic locales to see exotic birds.

Scott is a long-time friend of SRAS and his programs are always informative and entertaining. Join us on May 9th when he will share his experiences in these two birding hotspots.

*Monarch Butterflies, continued*

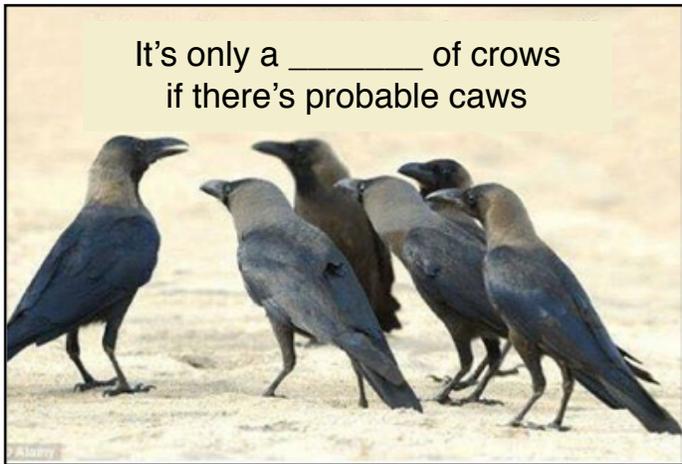
successfully raised and released over 3,000 Monarch butterflies to date. She has taught thousands of folks about the importance of Monarchs through her educational presentations and will be here teaching about the amazing transformation of Monarchs - from egg to caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly - on June 13. Come out and learn about these magnificent butterflies.

Quite a few SRAS members & friends braved the weather with eBird guru Holly Merker at Beaver Creek and Kahle Lake before our April 11 meeting. Thanks to Deb Freed for the photos.



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, March & May. The *Drummer* is available on our website in Adobe pdf and may be read or downloaded from the site – [www.senecarocksaudubon.org](http://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](mailto:fmcguire1@verizon.net).



## Matching Game, part 2

~ Janice Horn

From A Charm of Goldfinches and Other Wild Gatherings by Matt Sewell, published in 2017. Can you match these? Answers on page 7.

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. A bellowing of    | A. crows        |
| 2. A company of      | B. bullfinches  |
| 3. A flutter of      | C. sparrows     |
| 4. A murder of       | D. peacocks     |
| 5. A murmuration of  | E. vultures     |
| 6. An ostentation of | F. starlings    |
| 7. A party of        | G. ravens       |
| 8. A pitying of      | H. butterflies  |
| 9. A quarrel of      | I. nightingales |
| 10. An unkindness of | J. parrots      |
| 11. A wake of        | K. jays         |
| 12. A watch of       | L. turtledoves  |

## Arrival Dates - May

- Gary Edwards

Following is a list of approximate early dates of return for species migrating to or through the SRAS area in May. It is intended only as a guide and does not include ducks or uncommon/rare species.

- May 1
  - Semipalmated Plover
  - Least Sandpiper
  - Dunlin
  - Black Tern
  - Tennessee Warbler
- May 2
  - Canada Warbler
  - Bobolink
- May 4
  - Bay-breasted Warbler
- May 5
  - Cape May Warbler
- May 6
  - Virginia Rail
  - Sora
  - Acadian Flycatcher
  - Semipalmated Sandpiper
  - Lincoln's Sparrow
- May 7
  - Yellow-billed Cuckoo
  - Black-billed Cuckoo
  - Philadelphia Vireo
  - Blackpoll Warbler
  - Worm-eating Warbler
  - Wilson's Warbler
- May 8
  - Black-bellied Plover
  - Kentucky Warbler
  - Mourning Warbler
- May 9
  - Gray-cheeked Thrush
- May 11
  - Olive-sided Flycatcher
  - Willow Flycatcher
- May 14
  - Alder Flycatcher
  - Bank Swallow
  - Nashville Warbler
  - Yellow Warbler
  - Ovenbird
  - Common Yellowthroat
  - Hooded Warbler

### PA Firefly Festival

The 2018 PA Firefly Festival will be held on June 23 in Kellettsville, Forest County, PA. It celebrates the annual mating displays of over 15 different species of firefly. Perhaps the most famous is the Synchronous Firefly, which was discovered here in 2012. The *P. carolinus* is unique in that its flash patterns are in synchrony with each other, so they appear to be a string of Christmas lights hanging in the forest. The only other confirmed habitat for this species in North America is in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee. For more information or to sign up for their mailing list, see <https://pafireflyfestival.org>.



This Sandhill Crane flew over us at McMichael Rd

## Conneaut Field Trip Report

~ Deb Freed

Even though the temperatures began in the teens, sunshine and minimal wind made for a comfortable day for our field trip. Among the 18 people that gathered at the Custard's spillway were SRAS members, students from Clarion University and amateur photographers, Kathy and Dot. Waterfowl and Bald Eagles were abundant. We watched Rusty Blackbirds hop on a film of ice through marsh grasses and shrubby growth. A few Sandhill Cranes were seen flying or spotted in nearby fields. Their rattling, croaking calls were heard in the distance.

Field trip leader, Mal Hays, somehow kept the caravan of 10 cars together for all the stops. At South Watson Road, we added a Peregrine Falcon. Just south of Conneaut Lake along McMichael Road we were treated to the delicate notes of the Rusty Blackbirds singing from the bare trees. The next stop was a lunch break along the lake.

At Miller's Ponds the group was entertained by the kiting Rough-legged Hawks and several Kestrels. Everyone enjoyed the rising afternoon temperatures, a balmy 39 degrees!

At the Pymatuning Reservoir Mile Leahy counted 37 Bald Eagles (predominately juveniles) gathered across the reservoir. Ring-billed Gulls were perched along the railing in the parking area. One stood out as different. **Later, a photograph was used to confirm a Lesser Black-backed Gull, a rare bird for our area.** Across from the parking lot we observed a beaver swimming, seemingly undisturbed by the attention.

One final stop added a beautiful Northern Harrier soaring over a field and a very busy muskrat gathering grasses along the edge of a small pond. Everyone headed home after a good day of birding.

## Conneaut Trip Species List

~ Paulette Colantonio

### Wyattville (16 degrees)

American Kestrel  
Bald Eagle (nest)  
Canada Goose  
Song Sparrow  
Eastern Bluebird  
Red-tailed Hawk

### Custards (20 degrees)

Sandhill Cranes (flying)  
Wood Duck  
Northern Pintail  
Rusty Blackbird (walking on ice)  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Tree Swallow (Flapping wings in vegetation out in water)  
Bufflehead  
Ring-neck Duck (du jour)  
American Wigeon  
Gadwall  
Northern Shoveler  
American Coot  
Green-winged Teal  
Hooded Merganser  
Tundra Swan  
Blue-winged Teal  
Scaup species  
Common Goldeneye  
Mallard  
Bald Eagle (3)

### Marsh Road

Great Blue Heron  
Eastern Bluebird (Tip of dead snag)  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Bald Eagle (2 immature)  
Common Grackle  
European Starling  
Red-tailed Hawk

### Geneva

American Robin  
American Crow  
Bald Eagle

### Ford Stop

Bald Eagle (nest)  
Ring-billed Gull

### Greenwood Twp./South Watson Road

Peregrine Falcon  
Redhead  
Mourning Dove  
Bald Eagles (3)

### McMichael Road (Dot Farm Road)

Northern Pintail (everywhere)  
Sandhill Crane  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Eastern Bluebird  
Bald Eagle (5 mature, 2 immature)  
Purple Finch (beautiful singer)  
American Goldfinch (in vegetation near boxes)  
Mallard  
Rusty Blackbird  
Helicopter (undetermined species)!

### Silver Shores (lunch)

Herring Gull  
Red-breasted Merganser

### Miller's Ponds

American Kestrel  
Bald Eagles (15)  
Killdeer (only shorebird of the day)  
Rough-legged Hawk (one light/one dark)  
Turkey Vulture  
American Turkey

### Pymatuning (Spillway)

Bald Eagle (Mike counted 37)  
Horned Grebe (nonbreeding plumage)  
Lesser Black-backed Gull

### Hartstown

Northern Harrier (beautiful male)  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Rough-legged Hawk (one light/one dark)  
American Kestrel  
Muskrat (very busy)

*editor's note: Wow, I counted 68 Bald Eagles plus two nests for the day!*



Conneaut Marsh is also known for breeding Prothonotary Warblers, particularly in the McMichael Road area. You might want to plan a trip here in May or June. See the eBird bar chart here - <https://ebird.org/pa/barchart?r=L733414&yr=all&m=>

Visit us on Facebook!

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

## Cook Forest Programs

~ Dale Luthringer

**Saturday, May 19 at 9:00 am - 'Friends of Cook Forest Series: Garlic Mustard Pull'** Garlic mustard is an invasive species that is threatening native plants of Cook Forest. It is a highly shade-tolerant biennial herb that spreads quickly. Hand pulling and removing garlic mustard is an extremely effective remedy. Join our Friends of Cook Forest volunteers as we focus on some key areas that really need our help. Please meet at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a short presentation on how to identify garlic mustard, then we'll spend the morning pulling this invasive weed. (3 hrs)

**Friday-Sunday, May 25-27 - 'Cook Forest Living History Weekend'** Please join us as we celebrate the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Park's 125th Anniversary with a fun-filled weekend of living history as we journey through various historical eras of the United States: French & Indian War, Lumber Era, Civil War, WWI, and the War on Terror. Join living historian and master story-teller, Paul Stillman from Historically Speaking!, and historical interpreters, Dave Clark, Dennis Knowles, and Van Wagner as they take us through these noteworthy periods in history through first person character portrayals, and hands-on demonstrations.

**Saturday, June 2 at 9:00 am - 'Friends of Cook Forest Series: Milkweed for Monarchs Planting Event'** Monarch butterflies cannot survive without milkweed; their caterpillars only eat milkweed plants and monarch butterflies need milkweed to lay their eggs. Milkweed continues to decline across the landscape, which negatively affects monarch populations. Please join us at the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom for a short presentation before splitting into groups to plant milkweed in a few prime locations in the park. (2 hrs)

**Saturday-Sunday, June 9-10 - 'Cook Forest French & Indian War Encampment'** Cook Forest State Park will host a series of living history events depicting life during the French & Indian War. Highlights of this full two-day encampment sponsored by the Sawmill Center for the Arts

include woodland natives, cannon and musket firing, cooking, primitive skills, 18th century surgical techniques, blacksmithing, tinsmithing, pottery, children's games, sutler camp, renowned living historians, French & Indian War Era artisans, and live tactical engagements.

**Saturday, June 16 at 1:00 pm - 'Friends of Cook Forest Series: Susquehannock Hemlock'** Please meet at the Deer Meadow Picnic Pavilion at the Deer Meadow Campground for a short presentation on the hemlock woolly adelgid and interpretive hike to view the Susquehannock Hemlock, the Pennsylvania State Champ and largest known hemlock by volume north of the Great Smoky Mountains. (1.5 hrs)

**Friday & Saturday, June 22-23 at 9:00 am - 'American Canoe Association Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking'** Cook Forest State Park will be conducting an entry level American Canoe Association (ACA) sanctioned kayaking course for kayak enthusiasts. The following subjects will be covered: paddling environment, equipment, loading & unloading, rescues, maneuvers, and strokes. Everyone WILL GET COMPLETELY WET, so please dress appropriately. Participants must pre-register — to pre-register or get more information, contact Dale Luthringer, Environmental Education Specialist, at (814)744-8475 or [dluthringe@pa.gov](mailto:dluthringe@pa.gov) by 6/15/18.

**Friday, July 6 at 10:00 am - 'Kayaking 201'** Please meet at the Park Office for an intermediate skill level kayaking class. Remember to bring your swimsuits, sturdy river sneakers, change of clothes, and lunch. Water & snacks provided. We WILL get wet! Designed to integrate skills learned in Introduction to Kayaking, we will be focusing on T-Rescues, Self Recovery, Buddy Assists, and ferrying. Participants must pre-register — to pre-register or get more information, contact the Park Office at (814)744-8407 no later than 7/4/18.

**Saturday, July 7 at 8:30 am - 'Clarion River Paddling Program: Gravel Lick-Mill Creek'** Cook Forest State Park will be conducting a guided 8.5-mile interpretive paddling program from Gravel Lick to Mill Creek for experienced canoeists/kayakers only. This section of river is rich in lumber history, as well as wildlife viewing and fishing

opportunities. This is an excellent section of river to observe bald eagles and experience some of the best small mouth bass fishing on the National Wild & Scenic Clarion River. Cost is \$50/boat with check or money order made out to 'Commonwealth of Pennsylvania'. Lunch, as well as all canoeing & kayaking gear provided. Participants must pre-register by contacting the Park Office at (814)744-8407 no later than 7/4/18. (8 hrs)



There were reports of Snowy Owls in Clarion County this winter, but none of them lingered as this one did at Presque Isle to the delight of birders and photographers. Thank you to Dot Monahan for sharing her photo!

## Clarion County Winter 2017-18 Pennsylvania Birds Report

~ Carole Winslow

**Locations:** Curllsville (CV), Kahle Lake (KL), Mt Airy (MA), Mt Zion/Piney Tract/SGL 330 (MZ).

Two different species of goose are worthy of mention, with the first being a single **Snow Goose** seen with a flock of **Canada Geese** at New Bethlehem along Redbank Creek 12/22 (J&AK). At KL, a **Ross's Goose** was seen in flight with a flock of Canada Geese 12/25 (GE). Also seen in New Bethlehem along Redbank Creek was a male **Northern Pintail**, noted there both 12/22 and 1/23 (J&AK). Another male was also seen further upstream in Oak Ridge 1/14, possibly the same overwintering bird (J&AK). In the same area up to 4 male **Green-winged Teal** were also seen for the second winter, from 12/4 through 2/20, associating

with a large winter flock of **Mallards** and Canada Geese (J&AK, MM, MVT).

**Turkey Vultures** are now regularly returning in February and this year the first was noted near CV strips 2/25 (CW). The best raptor sighting of the season was that of a young **Golden Eagle** seen at the mouth of the Clarion River on the Allegheny River near Foxburg 1/5 (KC). Surprisingly there was only a single report of **Northern Harrier**, a male seen near Limestone during a WRS 2/5 (CW).

**Rough-legged Hawks** had a pretty good showing this season with multiple birds seen mostly over the southern area of the county. Likely at least six birds were present, two dark morph and four light morph. The areas with reports were Henry Rd, Dairy Rd and Leatherwood area all near New Bethlehem (AB, MH, RH, MM, CW), two locations at MA (AB, MH, RH, RN, CW), Reidsburg (CW) and Alum Rock (ML). The dates of sightings stretched from 1/6 through 2/13.

Once again this year, **American Woodcock** made their return before the official spring season. Four birds were heard calling and doing flight displays in a regular breeding area near CV 2/28 (CW).

**Short-eared Owls** were reported from two locations, a single bird on Rankin Rd near CV 12/6 (CW), and two seen at a reclaimed strip area near Callensburg 1/7 (MH). During the Clarion CBC on 12/17, a total of 11 short-eared owls were found by observers covering four different locations, all on reclaimed strip mine property (PC, GE, DF, MH, ML, et al.). A video of a **Snowy Owl** that was taken by a non-birder showed a bird just north of Clarion 12/23 (DF), and one was also reported near Sligo 12/25 (LG). At the Clarion Airport north of town, a third report of the species was noted 1/12 but on follow up could not be confirmed (PC, DF). The only noted sighting of a **Northern Shrike** this year was an adult bird seen on a WRS at MA 1/19 (RN, CW).

There were several areas with **Horned Larks** reported. Six birds were found at a location that is a possible breeding area, Rankin Rd near CV 12/15 (CW). At another location near CV on McCall Rd, a flock of 40 was noted in a pasture, along with four **Snow Buntings** and one **Lapland Longspur** 1/19 (RN, CW). At a large farming area on Dairy Rd near New Bethlehem there was a small flock of nine Horned Larks, two **Lapland Longspurs** and 23 Snow Buntings 2/24 (JF).

A **Fox Sparrow** was observed 12/15-12/17 at a feeder area near CV, a late migration date for this species (CW). Also near CV, a late **Swamp Sparrow** was found during the Clarion CBC 12/17 in a large cattail marsh area where they are regular breeders in summer (CW). During a WRS in the western part of the county near St. Petersburg, an **Eastern Meadowlark** was found 2/13, a rather early date back for this grassland species (ML).



The only finch species of note this year are **Pine Siskins**, which were reported rather sporadically. Small numbers were present just 1/13-1/15 at feeders in Rimersburg and CV (MM, CW). A feeder area in Strattanville did host up to a dozen birds also from 1/13 and then off and on in small numbers through the end of the season (RM).

**Observers:** Carole Winslow, Anthony Bruno, Pat Conway, Kurt Crosbie, Gary Edwards, John Fedak, Deb Freed, Len Groshek, Mal Hays, Margaret Higbee, Roger Higbee, John & Avis Keener, Michael Leahy, Ron Montgomery, Mark Moore, Richard Nugent, Marjorie VanTassel.



## Warbler Walk

Join us about 8:00 a.m. on May 19 at the Blood Farm Day Use Area of Oil Creek State Park for one of our most popular field trips. Last year we tallied 13 warblers including this Canada, and totaled 60 species. It's always a great day!

Answers to Matching Game Pt. 2:

1-B, 2-J, 3-H, 4-A, 5-F, 6-D, 7-K, 8-L, 9-C, 10-G, 11-E, 12-I

## Upcoming Dates & Events

May 9 - Scott Stoleson, "Birding Northern Argentina: Iguazu Falls and the Esteros de Ibera"

May 5 through May 13 - Birdathon

May 12 - PA Migration Count, send species to your county compiler

May 19 - Oil Creek State Park Warbler Walk, Blood Farm, 8:00 am

June 13 - Kimberly Vensel, Butterfly Program

August 8 - Annual Picnic at Beaver Creek



*May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds.*

*~ Edward Abbey*

## SRAS Leadership Team

Deb Freed	Media & Membership	226-4719
Paulette Colantonio	Nature Books	797-2031
Pat Conway	Facebook	752-2036
Gary Edwards	Outreach Programs/CBC	676-3011
Jeffrey Hall	Facebook	732-0258
Janice Horn	Treasurer/Birdseed Sale	226-7367
Mike Leahy	Beaver Creek	229-1648
Flo McGuire	Newsletter & Website	755-3672
Ron Montgomery	Outreach Programs	764-6088
Jim Wilson	Nest Boxes & Feeders	676-5455

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