Naturally

Newsletter of the Conococheague Audubon Society

September 2012

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****NOTICE: We have a new website address – conococheagueaudubon.org please bookmark this address.

New Web Site
By Val Barnes

Conococheague Audubon has a new URL: www.conococheagueaudubon.org.

Please update your browser’s list of bookmarks to point to the new site. And join me in sending a big thank you to Frank Hocker for being our webmaster and making this happen

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General News
By Donna Hocker

Science Fair Award Winner

Luke Brant was presented with a $50.00 Conococheague Audubon Award at the Franklin County Science Fair. Luke presented his project at the May meeting of Conococheague. His winning entry measured sunflower seed preference between black-oil and striped sunflower seeds. Luke attends New Franklin Elementary School. The entry was judged by Earl Nollenberger.

On the Record

A total of 62 species were seen on the Letterkenny field trip in April. Led by David Cooney the six birders added the Northern Waterthrush to the list that now totals 129 species.

Rhetta and Eric Martin led the trip to Little Cove. The 12 observers saw 69 species. This trip has been
held for the past 50 years according to our records.

It has been 20 years for the Horse Valley trip. This year the trip was led by Joan Duffield with eight participants seeing 71 species.

Bob Keener led the Path Valley trip. The Bald Eagle and Red-breasted Merganser were added to the list that now totals 129. The eight participants saw 77 species.

The Edenville trip was led by Eric and Rhetta Martin. The six birders saw 33 species bringing the total to 68 species.

Twenty-one beginning birders attended the June Workshop at Caledonia State Park. A total of 47 species were seen. Dave Cooney again coordinated the workshop.

Pennsylvania Migration Count

It was a beautiful day, so where were the birds? Did migration happen early with the warm weather in March? We’ll let the experts figure that out.

The Pennsylvania Migration Count (PAMC) was held May 12. Sixty-nine members of Conococheague Audubon Society participated in the count in Franklin County. Conococheague Audubon has participated in the PAMC for 20 years and this was the second lowest count on record with 135 species. Total birds were also down with only 10,344 recorded.

The day did have its highlights: nine Bald Eagles were seen, a record high; a Merlin was add to the Franklin County list for the first time, as was the American Golden Plover; the Dunlin reached a high of seven as did the Eurasian-collared Dove; other highs included the Pileated Woodpecker (39), the Eastern Wood-pewee (59), the Acadian Flycatcher (53), the White-eyed Vireo (21), the Cerulean Warbler (27), and the American Redstart (172).

A startling result was the low counts for the Mourning Dove (312), American Robin (778), European Starling (742), and the Common Grackle (640). The Dove often numbers in the 500-600 range and the others easily reach 1000 and above.

Nothing remains the same and this keeps members of Conococheague Audubon watching birds. We hope to see you next year, whether you are a novice or expert, on 11 May 2013.

Shooting Range at Long Pine Run Reservoir

Roy Brubaker, District Forester for the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), spoke to the Conococheague Audubon Board at their April meeting about the reopening of the target shooting range at Long Pine Run Reservoir. Following this informative meeting, Corresponding Secretary Val Barnes sent a letter to Brubaker. The letter stated that Conococheague Audubon is concerned about plans to reopen the target shooting range due to the possible impact on birds and other species in this Important Bird Area (IBA). If the plans for reopening the range proceed, Conococheague Audubon would like to see the range closed during the bird breeding season to minimize the potential disruption of successful breeding.

A task force has been put in place by DCNR to provide input on/review a number of critical documents necessary prior to reopening the range. These documents include:
1. Range Environmental Standards for lead and other contaminant levels,
2. Management and monitoring plan for the range and surrounding area, and
3. Range clean-up/mitigation contract.

The task force would also be working on range rules and regulations, and a strategic law enforcement plan/partnership agreement. Doug Powless and Val Barnes are representing Conococheague Audubon on the task force.
A date for the opening of the range has not been set, but they are hoping to have it operational prior to the 2013 hunting season. Specs for clean-up and redesign work are still being developed. Other issues the PA DCNR either has or will be looking at are:

1. The reopening will hopefully stop illegal target practice in other areas in Michaux State Forest.
2. The Watershed Authority is not concerned about the low levels of lead the shooting range might add to the Reservoir.
3. The people using the range will be responsible for clean-up.
4. Rangers will monitor the use of the range.
5. The task force will continue to monitor and evaluate the range usage.
6. The reopening of the present range is in the best location and offers the most economic use of the land and resources.
7. The location took into consideration private property.
8. It is likely that overhead baffles and surround berms will be installed to minimize noise pollution on the lake.
9. Members of Conococheague Audubon have been asked to monitor bird habitat before and after reopening of the range.

Members of Conococheague Audubon who use Long Pine Run Reservoir have been invited to participate in a focus group study regarding the range. If you are interested please contact Donna Hocker at dlahocker@yahoo.com

Forester Brubaker will speak to members of Conococheague Audubon at the March 11, 2013, General Meeting.

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Scholarship Support
By Larry Shillock

Beginning in September 2012, the Conococheague Audubon Society will offer scholarship support for individuals and groups who wish to defray the costs of attending conservation workshops, ornithology conferences, and Audubon Leadership Camps. To apply for aid, go to our web page, (www.conococheagueaudubon.org ) complete the application, and return it to the President. The board of directors hopes that most applications will be returned electronically, via email attachments. Members and groups who prefer to send in paper requests for funding may mail their application to: President Conococheague Audubon, P.O. Box 20 Fayetteville, PA 17222

Scholarship requests should not exceed $250 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Please be sure to file applications no later than 45 days prior to the event for which funding is sought. The President will inform applicants whether their request has been granted or denied. Reimbursement requires proper receipts, a Google map for mileage expenses, and a short written report or pamphlet describing the event.

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Norlo Park Garden
By Jean Morton

As September approaches, we look forward to cooler weather and seeing the seasonal changes in our garden. It will also make it more conducive to getting our weeding chores done.

We will have members of a garden club visit our garden, weather permitting, during the afternoon of 9 September. They look forward to seeing our native garden and to learn about the plants we have and the birds and insects attracted to our garden.

Our water feature has been turned off due to a leaking problem and we are discussing the best course of action to take to solve this problem. All love the beauty of our water feature and how it attracts the birds, so I hope this can be corrected.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and I hope to see you in the garden.

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Mark Your Calendar for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC)
By Val Barnes

We have scheduled our Christmas Bird Count for Saturday, 15 December 2012.

The dinner and tally will be at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, 17 December, at Menno Village Arbor Room.

Mark your calendar and plan to help count our feathered friends. People of all ages and levels of experience are welcome. To sign up, please contact Val Barnes, 352-4397 or vbarhen@pa.net.

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Chairperson Needed for Bluebird Trail
By Conway Bushey

On behalf of the Conococheague Audubon Society, we want to thank Shirley Fenstermacher for her time and devotion to the Bluebird Trail Committee, and all of the activities associated with chairing that Committee. Shirley is retiring as chairperson and we will need a replacement for her by March 2013.

The chairperson is responsible for coordinating the schedule of volunteers who check the bluebird boxes from April through August, and for arranging for the repair and/or replacement of bluebird boxes.

Our Society also supports attendance at the annual Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania meeting.

If you are interested in becoming chairperson of the Bluebird Trail Committee, please contact Conway Bushey at wbushey@embarqmail.com or (717) 262-5659.

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*** DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES FOR NOVEMBER 2012 NATURALLY NEWSLETTER IS 15 OCTOBER ***

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Send all newsletter articles to the editor, and all mailing changes to the assistant editor.

Conococheague Audubon Website

The NEW URL for our website is:
http://www.conococheagueaudubon.org

Or google - Conococheague + Audubon

Visit often to keep up to date on all activities.

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