Naturally
Newsletter of the Conococheague Audubon Society

March 2013

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Speaker at February Meeting
By Heather Sahli

Author and ornithologist Scott Weidensaul spoke to a packed audience at our February 11th meeting. Approximately 200 people were in attendance and Scott gave a wonderful talk about all the interesting research he and others are doing on the little studied Northern Saw-whet Owl.

CAS Board member Mary Craig donated a beautiful painting she did of a Saw-whet Owl, which was then given to Scott and the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art. The painting will likely be displayed at an upcoming owl art exhibit at the Ned Smith Center and then used as a fundraiser for them.

In addition to the wonderful audience in attendance at the meeting, CAS also raised $1754 to donate to the Ned Smith Center for their continued research on saw-whet owls. Donations came from CAS, our members, and the general public alike, with more than $300 being donated at the Monday night meeting.

Special thanks to everyone who helped to organize and publicize this event. We certainly reached a wide audience with Scott’s talk and now know much more about these cute yet enigmatic owls.

2012 Christmas Bird Count Summary
By Valerie B. Barnes

Thanks to the 80 field observers and 32 feeder watchers, the December 15, 2012 Christmas Bird Count in the Chambersburg Circle tallied 82 species and 32,002 individual birds. Numbers were high for this count; normally we see ~ 71 species and ~23,500 individual birds (after discounting a year with extraordinarily high numbers of grackles and cowbirds).

We saw White-winged Crossbills for the first time on this count. Teams reported unusually low numbers of Killdeer, American Crow, and American Tree Sparrow. We again missed these species seen on 30 or more previous counts: Ruffed Grouse, Chipping Sparrow, and Evening Grosbeak. We saw more than the usual numbers of both Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren, Red-tailed Hawk, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.
Mark your calendars for the next Christmas count - Saturday December 14, 2013!

Migration Bird Count
By Donna Hocker

Mark Your Calendars

The 2013 Pennsylvania Migration Count (PAMC) will be held Saturday, May 11. Last May, 69 people counted birds in the field in Franklin County and/or at their backyard feeders. Members counted 10,344 birds of 135 species.

PAMC is a county-based bird count. Observations can be made anywhere in Franklin County over a 24 hour period on count day. Individual participants in Franklin County send their data to county compiler, Donna Hocker, who in turn, forwards it to the state compiler. The results are published in Pennsylvania Birds our state ornithological journal.

The rules are simple: spend some time in the field counting birds in a specified area, keep track of miles traveled, and time spent counting birds. Birders of all skill levels can help out with the count. You can count the birds in your yard, at your feeders, in a local park or down the street.

This will be the 20th year the Conococheague Audubon Chapter has participated in this event. As always we need more people to count. If you would like to participate in the field but don’t know where in Franklin County to count or count birds at your feeders contact Donna Hocker at 352-8713 or email dlhocker@yahoo.com

Norlo Park Garden
By Jean Morton

As spring approaches and the migration of birds gets underway, our thoughts turn once again to our garden. We have two weeding work days scheduled for Saturday, April 6 starting at 9:00 A.M. and Wednesday, April 17 starting at 9:00 A.M.

Please try to come out and help on both days if you can. We can accomplish so much more when we have enough volunteers. Since our garden is well established it should be easier to maintain.

Changes to 2012/13 Activities List
By Valerie Barnes

Please note these changes to two field trips in the 2012/13 Activities List.

New Leader March 9: Saturday 7:30 A.M. York County for Waterfowl. Auto tour; return by 3:00 P.M. Leave from parking area at northeast corner of Route 233 and Route 30. Bring scopes, binoculars, and CB(s) and lunch. Conway Bushey 262-5659.

New Dates for Presque Isle trip: The dates for the Presque Isle and Pymatuning Lake trip are April 30 through May 2 (Tuesday - Thursday). The purpose of the trip is to view Spring migrants. Motel reservations in Erie. Bring scopes, binoculars, CB(s). Carpool. Dale Gearhart (H) 597-3979 or (Cell) 860-5799.
**CAS needs your help**

Valerie Barnes is relinquishing her position as **Corresponding Secretary**. Thank you Valerie for all your work on behalf of Conococheague Audubon Society (CAS).

The duties of the Corresponding Secretary as defined in the chapter by-laws:

The Corresponding secretary shall conduct all correspondence relating to the SOCIETY, shall issue all notices of Board meetings, as directed. Either by the instructions of the Board of Directors or at direction of the President, certain other members of the SOCIETY may be permitted to conduct SOCIETY correspondence. A copy of any and all correspondence shall be forwarded to the Corresponding Secretary.

As an elected officer, the corresponding secretary is a member of the Executive Committee. According to the by-laws: It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to take the initiative in determining the policies of the SOCIETY and to supervise all holdings of the SOCIETY. … Typically, the Executive Committee meets annually to discuss goals, major projects, and the budget.

Our Chapter Guidelines identify these typical kinds of correspondence - thank you notes to:

• Guilford Township, for the office at Norlo Park (annually, at the end of May)
• Any organization or non-member who helps with field trips (guide, parking, rest stop, etc.)
• Any organization or individual who donates money or property to CAS
• Any organization or non-member who volunteers for CAS activities (e.g., Norlo Park weeding, etc.)
• Speaker, if the arranger provides contact information
• Any member who is completing service (e.g., outgoing board member or officer or committee chair)

When a donation is received, the Corresponding Secretary should acknowledge the gift with a note.

Board members are asked to remind and provide details to the Corresponding Secretary to be sure the thank you notes are accurate and are sent in a timely fashion.

In August the corresponding secretary needs to write a promotional letter which announces the Wildlife Film Series to the Conococheague Audubon Membership.

Also, there is a vacancy in the **chair of the Hospitality Committee**.

The Hospitality Committee promotes sociability in the chapter with emphasis on welcoming guests to our activities. The Committee also displays membership folders, Activities Lists, cloth patches, CAS window decals, PA Birds Checklist, CAS Checklist, CAS Birds of Franklin County brochure and American Birding Association Trip List at each of the regular meetings. The Committee sends cards to members who may be ill or to deceased members’ spouses and/or family. Committee members also provide centerpieces, and coffee and tea service at the January Covered Dish Dinner.

If you are interested in either of these two positions, please contact Conway Bushey at 717-262-5659 or wcbushey@embarqmail.com.

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**Thank you**
By Doris Burdick

I would like to thank the members of Conococheague Audubon Society for the gift certificate to Snavely’s Garden Center. Your thoughtfulness and generosity is appreciated.

After the May 2013 Naturally I will no longer be serving as newsletter editor, Jennifer Wright will be taking on this position.
No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow. ~Proverb

Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush. ~Doug Larson

Visit a National Wildlife Refuge
by Doris Burdick

The National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) system is wonderful to visit any time of year, but a great opportunity for bird watching during the Spring migration.

Some refuges within a day’s drive:

* John Heinz NWR, Philadelphia, PA
  www.fws.gov/heinz/index.html

* Blackwater NWR, Cambridge, MD
  www.fws.gov/blackwater/

* Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, MD
  www.fws.gov/northeast/patuxent/

* Bombay Hook NWR, Smyrna, DE
  www.fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook/

Be sure to visit the refuge website to find out what is happening.

Conococheague Audubon Website

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

Or google - Conococheague + Audubon

Visit often to keep up to date on all activities.