



# QUITTAPAHILLA AUDUBON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2011

P. O. Box 123, Palmyra, PA 17078-0123

[www.QASAudubon.org](http://www.QASAudubon.org)

## Upcoming Programs . . .

The Quittapahilla Audubon Society holds its meetings in the Chapel of the Lebanon Valley Home located one half mile east of the intersection of Routes 422 and 934 at 550 East Main Street in Annville, PA. There is limited parking in front of the Home with additional parking available on the adjacent streets. Enter at the main entrance with the covered walkway in the front of the building. The Chapel is handicap accessible.

Programs are held at 7:30pm every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month from September through April (with the exception of November and December). The programs, which are free and open to the public, are designed for a general audience and children are welcome when accompanied by an adult.



**April 17, 2011**

### ***Native American Life in the Susquehanna River Basin Region***

*Stephen and Janeann Runkle* will share the lifestyle of Native Americans who inhabited the entire Susquehanna River Basin. Displays of hands-on artifacts will provide further insights to this presentation.

**May 25, 2011 - 6:00 p.m.** (*Details on page 3*).

***Annual Banquet*** Please note the time is 6:00pm; not 7:30 as listed in the 2010-2011 program flyer.

## Field Trips at a Glance ...

Please join us for as many of our 2011 field trips as your calendar will allow.

**Fridays**, weather permitting

### ***QAS / Mt. Gretna Bird Club Nature Walks***

Observation of flora and fauna. Meet Fridays at 9am at the Chautauqua parking lot off Route 117. Leader: *Sid Hostetter*, 964-3412.

**April 16, 2011**

### ***Ferncliff (Benton Hollow) Spring Wildflowers***

Easy walk to see wildflowers at this scenic lower Susquehanna River ravine. For carpooling details, contact trip co-leaders *Jim M. Logan*, 273-8438 or *Jim C. Logan*, 865-5522.

**May 8, 2011**

### ***Swatara State Park***

Observation of migrating songbirds. Meet at 3pm at intersection of Routes 72 and 443. Leader: *Gary Kinkley*, 503-4027.

**May 14, 2011**

### ***Pennsylvania Migration Count***

A count of migrating birds in Lebanon Co. Contact *Randy Miller*, 664-3778.

**May , 2011**

### ***Birdathon***

This QAS fundraiser involves competition between teams of birders who try to see or hear as many bird species as possible in a 24 hour period. Contact *Fritz Heilman*, 273-0487.

**June 4, 2011**

### ***State Game Land 246 (Round Top Mountain)***

Observation of flora and fauna. Meet 9am at the Karns Grocery parking lot on Cherry Dr, just south of Rt. 322 (Governor Rd). Leader: *Art Schiavo*, 533-1978

(continued on page 6)

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## Welcome to our new QAS members . . . Hope to see you at many of our events!

Karen Allen, John & Evelyn Antolick, M. Beard, Mary Jo Brown, Margaret Clark, Willy Domjahn, Douglas Durham, Darlene Dyabelko, Thomas Flynn, M. Freisen, David Gasslein, Ricky Geary, Janet Groff, Kenneth Hadley, William Hart, Peter Hatzfeld, Jay Herb, Cynthia Hoy, Rachel Kalyan, Ted Keen, Laura Kohr, Anne Kortright, Carolyn Kreider, Howard & Hanna Kulin, Jean Leaman, Linda Mears, Kurt Nielsen, Charles Parrott, Brenda Randall, Donna Rodgers, Tricia Rodgers, Gary Schaeffer, Bill Seifert, Ned Shanaman, Bernard Smith Jr., Osberto Solis, Robin Stutzman, Peggy Trout, Ramona Trump, Carol Volpe, Jane Wertz, Cheryl Wilcox, Susan Winward, E. Jean Witmer, Karen Wise, Allan Wolfe, Dean Zechman, and Jane Zerbe.

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## A Word from QAS President Gary Kinkley . . .

### The Best Birding Hotspot in Town

Imagine the best birding in town – in your own backyard! The past two years, we have highlighted the case for gardening with native plants in our program schedule. We began with an excellent program by Dr. Tallamy at our annual banquet last year, and we continued on the same theme with February's program by QAS member Dick Brown. Both speakers enumerated the many wildlife benefits that planting natives can provide. Now, as spring approaches, it is time to get out there and get our hands dirty.

I know that it can be a daunting challenge. I find it hard to believe how much of my yard has been invaded by invasive species (now that I am aware of them), and I complicated the situation by planting what I thought would be beneficial trees. Of course, they were all non-native species, and the rest of my property is lawn. Fear not! In Dr. Tallamy's book, *Bringing Nature Home*, he does not advocate starting from scratch. He makes the very practical suggestion to make changes little by little – replace a non-native species in one flower bed with a native one or plant a native tree where you didn't have one before. Maybe create a mini-meadow in your yard like some of the gorgeous meadows from Dick Brown's

program? Every little bit is a step for the positive. I would not consider myself a gardener, but I think that this approach is something that I can manage. Imagine the habitat that 400 plus QAS members could create if we all made small changes on our properties – not to mention the ripple effect it could create within our neighborhoods!

The best part is that we have so many resources at our disposal. There are several native plant sales within our community and the surrounding areas including the Manada Conservancy's sale on May 7, Hawk Mountain's sale on May 21 and 22, and the Meadowood Nursery is just a short drive away in Hummelstown. Other sales like the Lebanon County Conservation District's have included natives, and I am sure that I am missing several other sales. You really do not have to go very far to find native plants, and you can also receive recognition for your habitat work. Pennsylvania Audubon has started a program called "*Audubon at Home*." Learn more about the program at [pa.audubon.org](http://pa.audubon.org). At some point down the road, we may be taking field trips to the best birding hotspot in town, and it may be your backyard!

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## HersheyPark Fundraiser

-Rosemary Spreha

QAS will once again participate in the HersheyPark Food Service fundraiser. Volunteers work at food booths in the Park, Stadium, or Giant Center. Hershey-Park makes a donation to QAS for every hour worked and the volunteer receives a voucher good for a day pass at the park. Shifts are from 5 to 8 hours in length. If you are interested in helping with this fundraiser, please contact Rosemary Spreha at [rspreha@excite.com](mailto:rspreha@excite.com) or 717-657-0271.

## Dr. Tallamy at Lower Dauphin High School

-Gary Kinkley

If you missed Dr. Tallamy's presentation at last year's QAS banquet or if you would just like to hear it again, you have another opportunity. Dr. Tallamy will give his lecture *Bringing Nature Home*, based on his excellent book of the same name, on April 14, 2011 at 7:00pm in the Lower Dauphin High School auditorium. The Manada Conservancy is hosting this event, and we are partnering with them to get the word out. The event is open to the public – we hope to see you there!

Quittapahilla Audubon Society

# Annual Banquet

*Wednesday, May 25, 2011 – 6:00 p.m.*

Friendship Fire Hall, 610 South Second Street, Lebanon, PA 17042

Reservations Required

## Menu

*Baked Fish and Turkey*

*Potato Filling, Two Hot Vegetables, and Coleslaw*

*Fruit Cup, Dessert, and Beverage*



## *Marci Mowrey -- Speaker*

As President of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation, Marci has developed a 45 minute presentation about the history of our state park and forest system. It explores the evolution of our state forests from desert-like conditions in the post lumber boom to the rich natural heritage that we have today. Her presentation is a combination of interaction and lecture, and serves as a celebration of our natural heritage. The benefits of state parks and forests to local economics, human health, and quality of life, plus some of the threats facing our resources today will also be explored.

## Travel Directions

From 422 East, travel west on Cumberland Street and turn left onto Lincoln Avenue. Continue on Lincoln Avenue to the third traffic light and turn right onto Poplar Street. Go one block and turn left onto Second Street. The Friendship Fire Company is on the left – parking lot is on the right.

From 422 West, travel east on Walnut Street to Lincoln Avenue. Turn right onto Lincoln Avenue. Continue to the second traffic light and turn right onto Poplar Street. Go one block and turn left onto Second Street. The Friendship Fire Company is on the left – parking lot is on the right.

THE COST OF THE EVENING IS: **\$18.00 for Adults / \$8.00 for Children 4 through 9** (*under 4 are Free*)

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF ADULTS: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF CHILDREN: \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this slip and your check, payable to **The Quittapahilla Audubon Society** or **(QAS)** to:

Karen R. Light

186 Old State Road

Jonestown, PA 17038-8500

Telephone: 717-865-2818 (*Do not call after May 5*)

**MUST HAVE RESERVATIONS MADE BY MAY 13, 2011**

*– refunds cannot be made after the deadline –*

If you need information after May 5<sup>th</sup>, please call our treasurer, Steve Holzman at 717-964-3266.

## Sponsors Always Appreciated for Audubon Adventures for Classrooms

Each year, students in classrooms in Lebanon County and the Hershey/Hummelstown area benefit from reading *Audubon Adventures*. This activity helps them to improve their informational reading skills and broadens their awareness of the environment. The classroom kits are provided by our local Quittapahilla Audubon Society and are sponsored through donations.

If you would like to continue making this valuable resource available to local children, please complete the form below and mail it to QAS. A label indicating your sponsorship will be placed on the *Audubon Adventures* kit.

### AUDUBON ADVENTURE SPONSORSHIP FORM

Yes, I wish to sponsor an Audubon Adventure classroom for a donation of \$45. I understand a label indicating my sponsorship will be placed on the kit.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Quittapahilla Audubon Society  
PO Box 123  
Palmyra, PA 17078



## QAS-Announce Electronic Mailing List

-Steve Holzman

Join the QAS-Announce electronic mailing list and receive e-mail reminders for:

- QAS programs and field trips
- Annual bird seed sale and other special events
- Updates to the QAS web site

This mailing list has a low volume of messages, averaging approximately three to five messages a month. To add your name to this list, sign our sheet at the next membership meeting or send an e-mail to this address: [QAS-Announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:QAS-Announce-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

## Help Needed to Plant Trees

A Habitat Work Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 9, 2011 at Swatara State Park. Work will begin at 7:00am and end when the 10,000 native Aspen seedlings (of two species) have all been planted. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided by co-sponsors South Mountain chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society and Woodcock Limited of PA with PA DEP and the Game Commission. These groups have conducted similar projects in other state parks as well as eradicating invasive species in the areas where they are planting. Interested persons should contact Gary Kinley, 503-4027.



## Special Mobile Apps Offers

-Audubon Chapter Services  
February 23, 2011

Audubon Guide mobile apps are the leading nature and wildlife applications (a type of software) for Apple and Android mobile devices. Green Mountain Digital (GMD) has over 30 apps in the market, created in alliance with the National Audubon Society. GMD can offer value to you in several ways.

GMD offers special sales on apps each month at <http://www.audubonguides.com/news/whatsnew.html>. Specials/contests are also posted on GMD's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/AudubonGuidesInfo>. Please "Like" their page to learn about new opportunities. Every quarter they award an iPod touch to newsletter subscribers (new registrants only).

You can sign up for a chance to win and also receive announcements about new products and specials, as well as links to nature-related videos and contents at: <http://www.audubonguides.com/signupcontest.html>.

## Campers for 2011 Season

QAS is proud to report the issuance of camp scholarships to four persons for this year. Alex Maloy will attend ZooAmerica Camp; Collin Mentzer, 9, will go to Camp Kirchenwald – Night Hawks; Alyssa Murphree, 14, will attend a hiking Appalachian Trail, caving, and rock climbing camp at Kenbrook Camp; and Bert Myers, Environmental Education Specialist based out of Middle Creek, will attend Audubon Educator's Week at Hog Island Camp in Maine. Come meet and greet these campers at QAS's program on April 17 at 7:30pm.

## Welcome to Our New Board Members

We wish to say a big welcome to Jim Fiorentino and Brenda Gish who have been elected to the QAS Board of Directors.

Jim resides in Lebanon and works as field data entry manager at New Penn Motors. He is also a member of the Lancaster County Bird Club, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, and Rexmont Fire Co. He has been very active with the Boy Scouts of America for 20 years. He began serving on the QAS Board a number of months ago.

Brenda is a resident of Elizabethtown and is employed by the Department of Justice in Harrisburg. She was a former Board member, serving as publicity chair from 1996 through 2005. Brenda will begin serving on the Board immediately.



Audubon President David Yarnold surprised Olivia with the news that she will be honored at Audubon's Mill Grove's annual Friends of a Feather event April 30.

## Eleven Year Old Makes a Gigantic Difference

-Audubon Newswire, March 23, 2011  
Volume 9, Number 3

One 11 year-old girl can make a difference, as Olivia Boulder demonstrated by helping to raise over \$150,000 for Audubon's Gulf oil spill recovery efforts. Devastated by the disaster and eager to do her part, Olivia wrote a letter to Audubon offering her own illustrations to raise contributions for Gulf recovery efforts. The idea took flight, and Olivia sent out over 500 paintings, many now featured in the new book, *Olivia's Birds: Saving the Gulf*, written in her own words. Published in collaboration with Audubon, *Olivia's Birds* features an introduction by their own Dr. Steve Kress and is printed on FSC paper. Go to <http://bit.ly/d9wb5c> to order your copy.

## Attempt to Save Small-footed Bats

-Audubon Pennsylvania E-newsletter, Feb 18 2011

Alarmed by the state's failure to safeguard a colony of protected small-footed bats from disturbance by a proposed limestone mine near Blair County's Heller Caves, Juniata Audubon Valley Audubon (with the Center for Biological Diversity) has sued the state Department of Environmental Protection to save the bat hibernation site. To read more about Heller Caves and what Juniata Valley Audubon is doing, log onto this site: [http://www.rttcpa.org/files/Quarry/EHB\\_appeal\\_by\\_Juniata\\_Valley\\_Audubon.pdf](http://www.rttcpa.org/files/Quarry/EHB_appeal_by_Juniata_Valley_Audubon.pdf).

## Houses Aren't Just for the Birds

-Gary Kinkley

As many of us are starting to think about preparing for spring, one item on the to-do list is cleaning and fixing our bird houses for a new season. Whether it is wren houses, bluebird houses, or perhaps a house for the local screech-owl pair, invariably we think of birds when we think of putting out or building houses. But there are other species which benefit from manmade houses. This spring, why not build or buy a native bee or bat house?



As for the bee houses, any garden large or small can benefit from our native pollinators. Our native bees are excellent stewards of our native flora, and they too will readily take up residence in a manmade house. The bee species that will take up in your houses is called "solitary bees" and they behave as their name implies. They do not form large colonies like the honey bees that we all think of, but they are just as important as pollinators. You can find plans for your own native bee houses at [umaine.edu/publications/7153e/](http://umaine.edu/publications/7153e/) and more facts about the bees at [xerces.org](http://xerces.org).



If you have the right habitat, a bat house could be a lifesaver for our imperiled bat species. White-nosed syndrome has killed a million or more bats in the northeast. Bats that have the fungus wake from their winter sleep more often than bats without the fungus. Bats that wake up more often use more energy as they try to stay warm, and there is little or no food available for insectivores in the middle of winter. There is some preliminary evidence that manmade bat houses may help reduce the ill effects of white-nosed syndrome by creating a warmer environment for the bats than the drafty caves and buildings that they often use, and you will get the benefit of free insect control in exchange for helping the bats. It is a real bargain! For more information, check out [batcon.org](http://batcon.org).

So please consider more than just the birds when you are making your spring plans.

## Highlights of a Bluebird Trail

-Richard Light

As March 2010 began, the snow was disappearing. It was time to look for signs of spring, although skunk cabbage had been blooming for weeks, a milk snake was in the driveway, the coltsfoot was blooming, blue bells were breaking the earth's crust and bluebirds were flitting about. It was time to gather the tools and materials to clean and repair the bird boxes at the Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority (GLRA). Some things to remove were five white-footed mice and nests. In one box the mice and nests had to be removed three times.

March 16, 2010 brought a surprise, an egg in the barn owl box.

A month later we started a weekly check of the bluebird boxes. Things brightened a bit with five bluebird eggs, eight barn owl eggs, and a kestrel egg. To our dismay we found house sparrow eggs which we destroyed. When we first started taking care of the boxes we were told to remove the house sparrow nests, but a week later in a box nearby with bluebirds, we discovered the female killed with a house sparrow nest built on top of the bluebird and her nest. After some thinking, we developed a new plan to attack the situation. We took all the eggs except one out of the sparrow nest. The remaining egg was marked with a marking pen. The sparrow would return and lay more eggs. A week later we removed the marked egg and all but one of the new eggs. We then marked the remaining egg. We repeated this process as often as needed. Last year, we removed 23 eggs from one box. By letting the one egg, the sparrow returned to her own nest again and again instead of trying to make a new nest at another location – like a bluebird house. House sparrow eggs hatch in 10-13 days, bluebird's in 13-15 days.

April 14 we had three young barn owls, 19 bluebird eggs, four kestrel eggs and - a first for GLRA - five chickadee eggs.

Next week five young bluebirds.

Following week five tree swallow eggs.

As May 5 arrived five bluebirds fledged, seven young barn owls, 33 tree swallow eggs.

Two weeks later five chickadees fledged, 48 young tree swallows, four young kestrels.

May 25 the PA Game Commission banded seven barn owls; also three house wren eggs.

June 9, 30 tree swallows fledged, two kestrels left the box. Five young house wrens.

June 16 the last two kestrels moved on.

The barn owls departed their box July 21.

Seven days later the last tree swallow fledged.

September three bluebirds flew the coop.

(see GLRA Bluebird Chart to the right)

## Field Trips (continued from page 1)

**June 25, 2011**

### *Amphibian Amble*

Observation of amphibians and their habitat by an easy, shaded walk via a railroad/trail bed. For details, contact *Fritz Heilman, 273-0487*.

**July 17, 2011**

### *Butterflies, Dragonflies, and Their Habitat*

ID of butterflies and dragonflies at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. Meet 2pm at the Middle Creek visitor center parking lot. Hat and sunscreen suggested. Leader: *Fritz Heilman, 273-0487*.

## Field Trip Reports

**February 18, 2011**

-Evelyn Koppel

The Mt. Gretna Bird Club/QAS Walk was part of the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). We were joined by former Mt. Gretna residents, the Stewart Family as well as Ann, Randy, Steve, Sid and Evelyn. The children were very interested and knowledgeable about birds and enjoyed spending their day off from school birding with us. Thirty-six species of birds were spotted. Three hundred ring-billed gulls were our largest number of one species. The most unusual birds were a pair of wigeons on Conewago Lake. (more reports on page 7)



## Bluebird Sites

Former Chapter members, Bill and Nell Bennewill, send greetings to Quittapahilla friends. They live in the Penney Retirement Community, Penney Farms, Florida. Bill is the founding president of the Florida Bluebird Society. They invite all to check out these two web sites: [www.floridabluebirdsociety.com](http://www.floridabluebirdsociety.com) and [floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com](mailto:floridabluebirdsociety@yahoo.com).

	2010	8 years
Bluebirds	66	345
Tree Swallows	82	383
Kestrels	4	23
Barn Owls	7	19
House Wrens	5	77
House Sparrows	46 eggs	599 eggs – 29 birds
Chickadees	5	5



## Trout in the Classroom Project Report

What do you get when you put clean cold water, fish eggs, and almost 300 seventh-grade students together? You get excitement, genuine hands-on learning, a deeper understanding of freshwater ecosystems and the importance of the role we play. Thanks to the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program, administered by a partnership between the PA Trout Unlimited, PA Fish & Boat Commission, and the PA Department of Education, the students of the Palmyra Area Middle School have had the opportunity to roll up their sleeves and get their hands wet learning about Pennsylvania's only native trout, the Brook Trout.

The TIC project enables the students to become scientists by making daily observations, testing the water quality of the tanks, recording and analyzing the data, and determining if modifications are needed. Since the

project began in September, the students have had the opportunity to experience the life cycle of the brook trout first hand. Right now the brookies are beginning to look like real fish, as they become fingerlings. The plans are to release the fingerlings this spring into the Quitapahilla Creek.

One of the great benefits of this hands-on program is that it encourages the students to become good stewards of their environment by seeing first-hand how their actions affect the water quality in their own watershed and how those actions affect the native wildlife.

This interactive educational opportunity was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Quitapahilla Audubon Society, Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and PA Fish & Boat Commission.

-Gina Mason

## Field Trip Reports *(continued from page 6)*

February 20, 2011

-Fritz Heilman



Nine persons participated in today's field trip to Union Canal Tunnel Park as part of the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Great Backyard Bird Count. We got off to an excellent start with bird observations - while standing in the parking lot going over some examples of winter botany and the de-

tails of a red-tailed hawk secondary wing feather, two adult bald eagles flew high overhead, heading to the northwest.

In addition to the usual park birds, we had these other notable sightings: seven bluebirds (one giving the spring call); two red-tailed hawks soaring overhead; two red-bellied woodpeckers; one downy woodpecker; one flicker; and on the north portal side we observed numerous skeins of Canada geese (162 total) and snow geese (580 total).

As the birds were not as prevalent, more time was spent on botany, including the observation near the tunnel area of the large old white mulberry and its old neighbor the hackberry. The complete tally of birds will be submitted to the Great Backyard Bird Count website.

## Field Trip Reports: (cont'd from p. 7)

**Saturday, March 9, 2011**

-Fritz Heilman

This 2½ hour field trip through Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area was a joint effort between QAS and the Lebanon Valley Conservancy. The 19 participants enjoyed hearing the eastern phoebe and observing a bluebird, tree swallows, an adult and an immature bald eagle, a red-tailed hawk, two double-crested cormorants, a horned grebe, and numerous ducks including common mergansers, hooded mergansers, ring-necked ducks, a scaup, northern shovelers, green-winged teal, and American wigeon (baldpate). We were afforded a good view of the bald eagle's nest off to the left just after the sharp turn.

Finally after driving west on route 897 and turning onto the road that takes you past the small church, just over the hill to the left we observed hundreds of snow geese (see picture below). We tried to pick out a Ross's Goose with no luck.

At one point members of the Appalachian Audubon Society temporarily joined our group as they also were on a field trip here at one of our region's best birding locations.



## More Conservation News . . .

### Conservation Contributions

-Gary Kinkley

At the March 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, your QAS Board voted in favor of contributing \$500 to the Lebanon County Conservation District for the Envirothon. The Envirothon program exposes nearly 400 area high school, middle school, and elementary school students to our local flora and fauna through competition. The funds will be used for field guides, t-shirts, prizes, and other materials for the teams. It is a great way to promote environmental stewardship among the County's youth.

Also at the March Board Meeting, a motion was passed in favor of contributing \$175 to the Clarence Schock Memorial Park at Governor Dick. The money will be used to buy supplies such as field guides and binoculars to be used by visitors who attend the park's planned programs and activities. You can check out a list of activities at [parkatgovernordick.org](http://parkatgovernordick.org).

Lastly, QAS will be purchasing copies of the movie *Ghost Bird* to be distributed to local libraries. Look for a copy in your local library soon! If you would like to purchase a copy of this DVD for your own collection, refer to the article below for a special offer.

### Ghost Bird DVD Offer

Last fall QAS sponsored the showing of the critically acclaimed environmental documentary, *Ghost Bird*. In this film, Director Scott Crocker explored the remarkable rediscovery of the Ivory-billed woodpecker in the swamps of Arkansas, taking a closer look at the role politics, science, and culture took in shaping the unprecedented recovery effort.

The producers of *Ghost Bird* are offering an expanded DVD of the movie at a special discounted price of \$15.99 through the month of April. For each DVD that is purchased, Ghost Bird will also donate \$2 to QAS.

### Press Conference on Moratorium on Future Gas Leases in State Forests

-Sidney Hostetter

Representative Greg Vitali introduced a bill proposing a three (3) year moratorium on new leasing for gas drilling in state forests. A press conference was held in the Pennsylvania State Capitol's Media Center on March 9, 2011. Twenty-two representatives from environmental groups, Democratic congressmen, and Representative Vitali gave brief speeches in support of the bill. The speakers included the president of Appalachian Audubon Society and representatives from The Sierra Club, The Delaware River Water Keepers, Trout Unlimited as well as other environmental groups. I was among another seven environmentally concerned people in the audience including QAS Audubon board member, along with cameramen, videographers, and reporters.

All of the speakers expressed environmental concerns about preserving our state forest land, clean water, and wildlife for the present and future generations. The drilling jeopardizes the forest and wildlife including birds which are a barometer of the health of our ecosystem. Drilling involves not only the drill heads but also the underground holding tanks, pipes and electrical generators, etc. This fragments the forest interrupting the contiguous natural corridor needed for birds to flourish as well as decreasing the acreage available for the natural world. The passage of this important environmentally focused legislation depends upon the active expression of support from the public especially those concerned with preserving Pennsylvania's natural heritage.



## Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Report

-Fritz Heilman

December 18, 2010 marked the 31<sup>st</sup> CBC for QAS. Count weather was cold but favorable. We had 38 observers in the field in 10 parties and five feeder watchers. Total species count was 75; individual count 9,955. We had four species with the highest counts since the CBC began in 1980: 12 cooper's hawks, 11 hairy woodpeckers, 11 pileated woodpeckers, and 176 tufted titmice. Also of note were the observations of six bald eagles and one golden eagle (the latter at Second Mt. Hawk Watch), 50 "wild" turkeys at the Lt. Governor's mansion grounds and a flock of 35 pine siskins. No new species were added to our historical record.

Listed below are the section leaders, location in the count circle and species highlights:

1. Randy Miller (NW ) 43 species: 3 bald eagles; 1 red-shouldered hawk; 1 common grackle
2. Gerry Boltz (NC) 40 species: 1 northern harrier; 1 northern goshawk; 1 eastern meadowlark
3. Dave McNaughton (NC restricted areas) 38 species: 8 great-horned owls; 1 barred owl; 36 siskins
4. Dennis Wingle (E) 28 species: 2 mute swans; 1 killdeer; 1 white-crowned sparrow
5. Rosemary Spreha (WC) 42 species: 3 killdeer; 1 yellow-bellied woodpecker; 1 fox sparrow
6. Greg Burgdorf (WC) 43 species: 8 common mergansers; 130 horned larks; 5 myrtle warblers
7. Stephanie Butler (S) 32 species: 3 American kestrels; 6 American black duck; 8 common mergansers
8. Fritz Heilman (SC) 35 species: 1 Wilson's snipe; 2 brown creepers; 1 American Tree sparrow
9. Steve Rannels (W) 49 species: 2 northern harriers; 1 long-eared owl; 1 eastern meadowlark
10. Dave Schwenk (2<sup>nd</sup> Mt. Hawk Watch) 15 species: 2 bald eagles; 1 golden eagle; 4 common ravens

**Notes:** - All historical CBC data (including this season's count) is available on line at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) (count code PALC).

Chuck Berthoud is the Lebanon County compiler for the magazine, *Pennsylvania Birds*. Throughout the year, any county bird sighting of note can be sent to him at: 47 Brookside Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033; home # 717-533-7136 or cell # 717-608-2614.

If interested, subscriptions to *Pennsylvania Birds* and membership in the Pennsylvania Society For Ornithology can be made by writing to Pennsylvania Birds, 2469 Hammertown Road, Narvon, PA 17555-9730 (web address: [www.pabirds.org](http://www.pabirds.org)).

## Radiation Testing on Drinking Supplies

-Bud George, Friday, March 4, 2011

I soon will be introducing legislation calling for mandatory radiation testing of water potentially affected by Marcellus Shale natural-gas drillers and operations. The testing would be required both before and after treatment but always before it is released into waterways used for drinking supplies. The testing would be paid for by the gas companies but performed by independent and certified water-testing companies.

Both the acting DEP secretary and his predecessor have indicated such testing is worthy of consideration in the wake of the Feb. 27 New York Times story that suggested a lack of radiation tests at 65 public water intakes downstream from releases of Marcellus wastewater.

In today's edition of the New York Times, it is reported that an early draft of a 2004 EPA study discussed potentially dangerous levels of contamination in hydrofracking fluids and mentioned "possible evidence" of contamination of an aquifer. The final version of the report excluded these points, concluding instead that hydrofracking "poses little or no threat to drinking water." EPA documents, available on the Times website, indicate EPA officials also were considering a moratorium on hydrofracking.

However, an EPA whistleblower, according to the Times, said the agency had been strongly influenced by industry and political pressure to soften the study.

Meanwhile, two water providers - the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority and Pennsylvania American Water Co. - have said they will begin testing water supplies because of the reports.

Pennsylvanians deserve clean water and assurances that it is safe to drink. My measure would help to provide those assurances. If you agree, and would like to cosponsor this legislation, please call my office at 787-7316 or email me at [cgeorge@pahouse.net](mailto:cgeorge@pahouse.net).

## Art Adds Another Bird to His Life List

QAS Conservation Chairman Art Schiavo and a birding buddy, Wayne Laubscher recently traveled to Honeoye, NY to see a Lewis's woodpecker. The Lewis's woodpecker usually resides in western USA, but has been a constant visitor in this area of New York since October 30, 2010. Since it could depart at any time, Art and Wayne felt very fortunate that they were able to see it and get a number of great pictures. I was going to add a picture to this article, but it just does not do it justice in black and white. Please look it up in your bird book or ask Art to see the photos. They are amazing.



## A Hawk's Timber Hills Hideouts

-From Mt. Gretna Bird Club Newsletter

When you're up to your ears in snow and looking for a glimmer of spring, any sign will do. If you can't find a robin, a red-shouldered hawk will do.

Sarah Ellis was first to spot this red-shouldered hawk outside the window of her Village Lane home in Timber Hills, Mt. Gretna early this year. A few days later, he showed up on a lamp post at the Valley Road home of Evelyn Koppel. (A fitting location, since Evelyn and husband Sid Hostetter are founders of the Mt. Gretna Bird Club and QAS Board members).

What's the attraction? Could be he's dining on other birds that show up at our feeders, surmised Evelyn. "That's not a nice thought, but it's probably true." Red-shouldered hawks have always been around, but now they're more prevalent, probably because development has taken its toll on the native habitats of song birds, she says.

## QAS Candidates Needed

Our annual elections will be upon us before we know it. Brenda Gish has been nominated for Treasurer and Stephanie Butler, Vera Freed and Jim Fiorentino as directors with terms expiring in 2013. We still have a number of positions to fill. Open positions are Vice President; Secretary; Education chair; and Newsletter editor. If you are interested in serving QAS in some capacity, please contact President Gary Kinkley at 503-4027 for details.

## QAS Fall Newsletter Deadline

Any persons who have information to be included in the next issue of the Quittapahilla Audubon Society Newsletter are invited to send them to Dottie Leach by July 20, 2011. Articles may be emailed to [naftz78@aol.com](mailto:naftz78@aol.com) or mailed to her at 78 Naftzinger Rd., Annville, PA 17003.



Bird watchers at Middle Creek Field Trip on March 2011.

## Birdfest to be Held in New York

You're invited to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Birdfest at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute in Jamestown, NY, a four-day celebration of birds and birding, June 9-12, 2011. Cosponsored by the American Birding Association, this year's festival will offer three all-day field trips including the popular "Whirlwind Warbler Tour," as well as many half-day trips, complemented by speakers and workshops in the afternoons and evenings. Representatives and vendors from bird-related organizations will be on hand throughout the festival. Friday is a special day, loaded with programs for children and novice birders.

RTPI President Jim Berry will launch the event on Thursday, June 9, with a special presentation on The Peterson Collection, during which he will unveil a few of the rarest pieces of Peterson art and memorabilia and talk about their significance. Also featured will be Dr. John Rappole, author of *Birds of Texas: A Field Guide*, *Ecology of Migratory Birds: A Neotropical Perspective*, and *Wildlife of the Mid-Atlantic: A Complete Reference Manual*.

Complete details about this event appear on the web at <http://Birdfest.RTPI.org>. Register early to assure your first choice in field trips!

And please help spread the word about this event! Share this information with anyone you know who may be interested in attending.

## Conservation Organization Websites

Would you like to keep more in tune with current conservation issues and programs? Here are a few for you to research.

TogetherGreen is a major conservation and capacity building initiative of Audubon, supported by a generous gift from Toyota. The goals of the program are to nurture conservation leaders, achieve conservation results, reach new and diverse audiences, and engage millions of Americans in conservation action. For more information, visit [www.togethergreen.org](http://www.togethergreen.org).

The Renew Growing Greener Coalition is the Commonwealth's largest conservation, recreation, environmental coalition, representing over 200 organizations and government entities. For more information, visit [www.RenewGrowingGreener.org](http://www.RenewGrowingGreener.org).

The Pennsylvania Forest Coalition is a unique alliance of hunters, hikers, anglers, landowners, wildlife-watchers, paddlers, bikers, churches and conservation groups who are united in our concern for the good stewardship of our public lands. For more information, visit [www.PaForestCoalition.org](http://www.PaForestCoalition.org).

**LEAVE A LEGACY FOR QAS**

You, as a member or friend of QAS, can leave a legacy that will help save the special areas you have explored and loved long after you are gone. Remember Quittapahilla Audubon Society, your LOCAL Audubon connection, through a bequest in your Will or through a gift annuity that will specifically support QAS programs while paying you a monthly income for life.

To learn more about how you can make a bequest and create a permanent legacy in your name or in someone's memory, as well as tax benefits for planned giving options, please contact your attorney or financial advisor.

In supporting a cause that you hold dear, you can have peace of mind that your time on this planet has mattered.

**Chapter-Only Membership Application Information**

-Jim M. Logan

Quittapahilla Audubon Society offers a local Chapter-Only membership that differs from the current National Audubon membership in these ways:

1. The annual fee of \$20.00 will go directly for QAS activities only.
2. The membership period runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>, regardless of when you join.
3. You will receive the chapter newsletter informing you of upcoming events, but you will not receive the *Audubon* magazine.

If you are interested, please issue a check to QAS for \$20 and mail to: Chapter-Only Membership, c/o Jim M. Logan, Chairman, 810 Hill St., Lebanon, PA 17046. Do not mail to the National membership address in Palm Coast, FL.

**OFFICERS and CHAIRPERSONS for 2010-2011**

President - Gary Kinkley.....	503-4027	Field Trips - Fritz Heilman .....	273-0487
Vice Pres. - Open.....		Membership - Jim M. Logan.....	273-8438
Secretary - Evelyn Koppel Hostetter .....	964-3412	Newsletter - Dottie Leach .....	838-3397
Treasurer - Steve Holzman.....	964-3266	Programs - Board Members .....	
Conservation - Art Schiavo .....	533-1978	Publicity - Ruth Krebs .....	867-4884
Education - Open.....		Hospitality - Open .....	

Above officers and committee members also serve on the Board.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Stephanie Butler (2011) .....	867-4377	Rosemary Spreha (2012) .....	657-0271
Vera Freed (2011).....	838-0223	Jim Fiorentino (2012) .....	274-2305
Sidney Hostetter (2011) .....	964-3412	Brenda Gish (2012) .....	367-1926
Open (2011)			

The QAS Board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday in January, March, May, July, September, and November at the Lebanon Valley UCC Home, Annville, PA. Meetings are open to interested persons. If you would like to attend a meeting or are interested in finding out about any of the open positions listed here, please contact Gary Kinkley, President.

Please send **ADDRESS changes and corrections** to Jim M. Logan, 810 Hill St., Lebanon, PA 17046

QUITTAPAHILLA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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**National Audubon Society**      **CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

*Local Chapter Quittapahilla Audubon (C0ZU16OZ)*

**Yes**, I would like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local chapter at the INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP cost of \$20. Please send AUDUBON magazine, my membership card, and the chapter newsletter to the address below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Introductory Membership \$20.00.      My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Please make all checks payable to:

**National Audubon Society**

PO Box 422250

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