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# PSO Pileated



October 2020

*The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology*

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## From the President's Desk....

It's the last quarter of 2020! Wishing time away is not a wise strategy at my age, but this has been a year that most of us will be glad to see come to an end. For far too many people, 2020 has been fraught with fear, isolation, sadness, and loss. Circumstances that were unforeseen and out of our control prompted folks to reassess values and priorities. Social isolation created time for reflection on what is most important. Human tragedy can and sometimes does result in expressions of our "better angels."

There is clear evidence that this has been the case this year. Those of us with a strong conservation ethic find encouragement knowing that one response to house-bound quarantine has been a blossoming interest in the natural world. Suddenly gardening and backyard bird feeding supplies are out of stock at the local lawn and garden center. Cornell Lab programs such as Project Feederwatch, eBird, and Celebrate Urban Birds have received record participation. Local, state, and national parks are filled with people seeking fresh air, green surroundings, places to decompress, and a chance to reconnect with wildness.

The year 2020 will also be remembered as one in which violence in minority communities resulted in an awakening in the consciousness of white America that the promise of liberty and justice for all is not yet a reality.



Everyone, regardless of race or ethnicity, has a right to enjoy avian life.

Photo compliments of Doug Gross

The peaceful protests across our nation have had a promising component: the presence of all races and ethnicities marching as one and together demanding change. "White privilege" has made us blind to injustice and oblivious to the needs of communities other than our own. That many people now acknowledge this and are determined to address the issues and effect a transformation are positive outcomes from the awful, horrific events that precipitated this awakening.

Interestingly, these two threads of change in America weave together when it comes to our passion – birding. Everyone, regardless of race or ethnicity, has a right to enjoy and conserve the wonder and beauty of avian life. Your PSO Board of Directors recognizes that we have work to do in that we have limited participation by people of color in our organization, and our membership is overwhelmingly white. The following is a statement of purpose that we have adopted.

***"The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (PSO) believes that birding connects people with nature, improves their quality of life, and creates advocates for the protection of the wild birds we love. Recent tragic events have made it obvious that racism and discrimination in America remain systemic. We recognize that our membership does not currently reflect the***

***patchwork of ethnic diversity that is America. We resolve to change that by reaching out to communities of Black, Indigenous, & people of color with birdwatching opportunities in their locales, by making the PSO a welcoming, safe, and inclusive place and by encouraging their participation in the membership and leadership of the organization. We encourage our members and the regional bird clubs around the Commonwealth to join us in taking action so all Pennsylvanians have the opportunity to discover the joys of birding.”***

What an exciting prospect this presents to us! I had time to “Zoom” a number of online webinars and meetings over the last several months, especially during #BlackBirdersWeek. There are many bright, young, dedicated birders of color who are asking the right questions, thinking creatively about sharing their avocation, and willing to partner with like-minded groups to make birding a joy for all ethnicities. I came away from the experiences thrilled and excited about the future

of birding in America. Here in Pennsylvania we have regional clubs and groups that are already succeeding in this goal, and I encourage you to seek opportunities to participate in your area. PSO members have already reached out to me with ideas and suggestions relating to our annual meeting and other activities.

Your input is most welcome in helping us in our efforts to enhance the diversity of the PSO. Please share your thoughts with me via email, and I will be certain to include them in future board discussions. Even as you think with us and share your ideas, you can begin to bring about the changes that are needed in your local community. Connect with minority friends where you and they live, work, and recreate. Invite them to go birding with you! Recognition that there needs to be a correction is only a first step. The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology is committed to action that results in every Pennsylvanian having the opportunity to share in the joys of birding.

Evan Mann, President  
Susquehanna County

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## Birding Backpacks

by Nancy Van Cott

Looking at birds through binoculars is second nature to most birders. However, not everyone – especially a beginning birder – has access to a pair of optics. Now, some Pennsylvania libraries are making binoculars available for their patrons to borrow by adding Birding Backpacks to their collections.

A group of birders in Susquehanna County recently raised funds to supply their four county libraries with backpacks filled with birding essentials. Each pack contains two pairs of binoculars (to encourage an adult and a child to go birding together), a field guide, a list of local birding spots, a county bird checklist, and information about how to use and care for binoculars, along with a small notebook for the borrower to keep where they can list the birds they see or make field notes. Even though the



pandemic cancelled plans for a public kick-off program at the main county library, the backpacks have already been popular there and at the three branch libraries.

For many birders, their love of birds was sparked by studying the intricate beauty and fascinating behavior of birds through binoculars. The aim of the Susquehanna County birders in starting this program was to inspire this same love in the next generation of

birders, and they hope that the idea of Birding Backpacks for libraries will spread across Pennsylvania, and in turn, light that spark in young birders across the state!

If you are interested in learning more about the Birding Backpack program in Susquehanna County, contact Nancy VanCott at [nancy.vancott@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.vancott@gmail.com).

# We Bird, eBird

eBird has taken off as more and more birders use it to keep track of their personal records. It has become an increasingly valuable tool in the collection of worldwide avian data. Birders, while using eBird, should be aware of what they can do to make the data more valuable to themselves and to others. We will look at some of the things that make eBird better for all in this and following newsletters. This month we will focus on Comments and Filters.

## Comments

Comments should always be used when including a bird that is flagged as rare on an eBird checklist. The primary information for which the eBird reviewer is looking (especially if there is no photo or other media) is a description of the bird so that a determination can be made concerning the accuracy of the report. What often is provided instead is a person's encounter with the bird, i.e., "It was seen circling for five minutes before flying off," or "It was seen by everyone in the group," etc. These types of comments do not give the eBird reviewer any help in determining the veracity of the sighting. Instead, describe what you see and/or hear of the bird itself. "Small flycatcher, no wing bars, dark back, white belly, flicking its tail." Don't worry if you don't know all the "proper" terminology or if you don't think you're very good at writing it up. With practice you will get better at describing birds, and you just might find it helps you to learn the field marks which will help you to identify birds more easily.

When making comments about birds that are flagged because the numbers are above the filter limits for the location and season, let the reviewer know how you counted the birds; i.e., "Exact Count," or "Estimated by groups of 100." Also, a comment like, "Prime breeding habitat for the species over three miles," or "Many fledglings included in the count," gives the reviewer and others who may access the list in the future an explanation why a high number of a particular species was observed at a specific location. As an aside, you should try to avoid using the dreaded "X" on an eBird checklist as that could mean anything from one to one billion birds. Your best estimate is always better than using the "X."

Also avoid the comment, "Have photos." Instead, upload one or more of your photos to the checklist, so the reviewer does not have to email you asking for the photo. Uploading the photo also gives a permanent record of the sighting with the checklist. Don't hesitate to upload a

photo because of a lack of quality. A picture that will document the presence of the species is what is needed – it does not have to be one that will win a photo contest.

One last thing, the comments may be used to record behaviors or other things of interest for your own records. As an example, recently I observed a Cooper's Hawk chasing two Belted Kingfishers and made note of it in the comments section as it was a new experience in birding for me, having not realized before that kingfishers might be potential prey for "Coops." I now have added a piece of information that I or other birders can access in the future.

## Filters

eBird filters are set, not to make life harder for birders, but to help ensure the quality of the data received. eBirders need to keep in mind that filters are set for birders of all levels of experience. So, while you may be able to identify the differences between House and Purple Finches with both eyes closed and one arm tied behind your back, others struggle to do so. Fall examples could include species like Philadelphia Vireo and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher to name a couple. If you are an experienced birder, try to look at these filter settings as an educational tool for less experienced birders rather than an opportunity to get frustrated. Try to see the "Rare" bird flag in eBird not only about how common a bird is, but what challenges it may present for correct identification by the wide range of birders who use eBird.

Filters are set at a county level and not to specific locations in the county which may cause locally common species to be flagged for exceeding count limits. For example, while Canada Warbler may be a common enough breeder in a particular location, they may be tough to find in the rest of the county. Or perhaps having 500 Broad-wings at a fall hawkwatch is not unexpected, but for birders away from the hawkwatch that would be a highly unusual number.

In some cases, early/late dates have been set automatically by the database itself, based on volumes of data-driven evidence of occurrence and confirmed sightings of outliers within date ranges. This "machine-intelligence" relies on the data in eBird itself to set the dates. Some years, species trend a few days earlier or later than normal, based on weather and other variables. When this happens, the filters don't know this in real-time, so there's a lot of flagging going on. Please be patient as this will usually clear up in just a few days.

There is also the case of irruptive species which in many years may be rare. Take for example Red-breasted Nuthatches which in numerous winters are barely reported in many PA counties, while in other winters they may be abundant. In cases like these, filters may or may not be temporarily changed based on the ease or difficulty the wide range of birders using eBird have in correctly identifying the species. Speaking of temporary changes, during events like the “Great Backyard Bird Count,” filters are temporarily changed on a number of species because of the increase of less experienced birders who are making reports on eBird during the count.

Finally, please appreciate the fact that eBird reviewers are volunteers who take on the task because they share the same passion for birds that you have. These volunteers spend many hours trying to ensure the data in eBird is as accurate as possible so that it will be of the most value to researchers and everyday eBirders alike. In short, they

and all other eBird users are on the same team. If you have a question or concern about the filter, please don't hesitate to contact a local reviewer. You just might find that she or he is pretty reasonable and actually appreciates constructive feedback.

### More Information

Follow this link for more information on eBird best practices <https://support.ebird.org/en/support/solutions/articles/48000795623-ebird-rules-and-best-practices>. As an eBird user or reviewer, if you have a topic you would like to have covered in a future article, please contact me at [verngauthier14@gmail.com](mailto:verngauthier14@gmail.com).

Good birding,

Vern Gauthier

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## Recap of July PSO Board Meeting

The Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology Board of Directors met on July 28, 2020, with 16 directors and two Pennsylvania Game Commission representatives present for the teleconference meeting.

The lack of access to Gull Point at Presque Isle State Park was discussed with the PGC representatives. Gull Point seems to be off limits at this time due to problems with the general public including fishermen, boaters, and sun-bathers but not birders. The conclusion was that a new path to the observation tower needs to be roped off so that people know what area is off limits. It was suggested that PSO could donate money for the markers if necessary to move this issue forward.

The possibility of PSO's holding a Zoom panel discussion regarding birding ethics for the birding community was discussed.

The treasurer's report was given. A slight downturn in membership, possibly due to the Corona virus, was noted. Otherwise PSO is still in good shape financially.

A new PORC secretary has been elected. All PORC records are up to date, and PORC is running smoothly. A volunteer has been found to digitize the 13 boxes of old PORC paper records.

Wildlife corridors in Pennsylvania were discussed, including the recently introduced legislation. The Endangered Species Coalition is promoting this. A motion was made that PSO join the coalition. The motion was seconded and passed.

The BLM is trying to conduct grassland projects without public comment. A letter to which PSO is signatory has been sent to BLM noting this.

The Great American Outdoors Act was passed by the House of Representatives which will permanently fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Many projects and agencies will benefit from this act.

We decided that PSO should adopt a statement of inclusivity.

A complete transcript of the meeting minutes may be found on the PSO website.

Roger V. Higbee, Secretary  
Indiana County  
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# How to Report Sensitive Bird Observations

By Dan Brauning and Cathy Haffner – Pennsylvania Game Commission

Think back to the moment when you found a bird you didn't expect. You probably had a burst of excitement, maybe some doubt, your heart rate increased, and the thrill of discovery surged through you. Then, another response was probably, "I have to tell Sally about this." As birders, we look forward to those experiences. It's the thrill of the chase, the reward for studying our field guides and natural history, to anticipate the unexpected and to identify something you had not expected. That discovery doesn't have to be rare; it could simply be a good look at a beautiful bird.

Birding includes a mix of personal, social, and conservation enthusiasm. Even when birding on our own, we are aware of a community that shares this interest and potential implications of our sightings. That may not be in our conscious thought with every catbird or fall warbler that we encounter, but observing birds incorporates a range of values connected to our enjoyment and a responsibility to ensure that enjoyment is available for future generations. For example, observing an uncommon bird, particularly during the breeding season, involves information that could be useful for conservation. This is the essence of eBird, whose goal is to "gather this information in the form of checklists of birds, archive it, and freely share it to power new data-driven approaches to science, conservation, and education."

These diverse benefits to birding have been enhanced immeasurably by modern social and data tools, back to birding hotlines and listservs. Now eBird captures and announces to the world every sighting in which you choose to hit "submit." Without going into a broad discussion of the benefits and detriments of social media, we can recognize the value of sharing information among the members of the community who enjoy birds. And this has been multiplied manifold by the growth in the number of birders in the past few years. Even in rural areas, it is not unprecedented to encounter someone independently birding a local hot spot. Generally, it is socially appropriate etiquette to share your experience with that person. And now, when we post a picture or birding experience to our Facebook birding group, we are announcing this to a statewide network of as many as 10,000 other birders, or possibly over 1,000 within a county network. And, with many newer members, there's a desire to learn more and experience the range of birds that veteran birders normally enjoy. There are a lot of

binoculars out there, the majority of which we don't know at all.

So, are there times when it is appropriate NOT to openly share, in person or publicly, your observation? This question extends beyond an eBird checklist or a Facebook posting. The basic question includes that phone call to any other birder whom you know. Are there times when we should not share a sighting with others at all, or at least wait for an extended period of time?

The biggest advocates for birding say YES. National Audubon and the American Birding Association have guidelines for ethical birding and photography. They each recognize that there are circumstances in which the details or a species and its location should not be publicly shared. The basic premise is that additional attention by people may at times be detrimental to the very bird you encountered – that, regardless of the motivation, too much attention can be a bad thing for some birds. Birds can, and have been, "loved to death."

Our intentions are not to review or establish the particulars of when and where bird observations are to be shared. Links below to those organizational documents provide well-established guidelines although maybe PSO should establish its own policy. The following thoughts are gleaned from other ethics statements. But we think it is useful to articulate some of the principles for sharing observations and repeat some of the suggestions provided by these larger national organizations. And these concerns extend beyond impacts on the birds themselves but include access onto private property as well. The point of this article is to stress: Don't share bird observations when public information of the sighting may place that individual bird in jeopardy by drawing specific attention to its presence. This is a critical decision point for rare **breeding** birds, whose success or failure quite literally can be determined by the observer's actions. ABA says it best:

"Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private landowners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities."

Rare nesting birds tend to be the most vulnerable. Nesting birds are attached to a specific location for an extended period of time, and various stages of nesting make those birds particularly vulnerable. Eggs and young will chill and die if incubating adults are spooked from their nest too often or for an extended period. Juvenile songbirds may prematurely fledge if frightened from their nest, placing them at higher risk of predation. Predators have learned to respond to human activity to identify vulnerable birds, such as when adult birds sound alarm calls in response to our presence. Without even knowing it, our presence at a nest is attracting predators (mammals by your scent and birds by the warning sounds), potentially resulting in a human-assisted predation after we are gone. We won't see the results of this, after obtaining that close photograph, or after the fifth friend of a friend also had a close encounter to add that bird to his or her checklist. We are blissfully ignorant of the impact a public checklist has had.

Taking this even further, federally endangered species protection defines "take" to include not only shooting but also disturbance. Flushing a listed species from its perch is a violation of the Endangered Species Act. This is why the Game Commission promulgated Eagle Etiquette when eagles were federally listed. So, even though eagles are no longer endangered or threatened, flushing an eagle for a picture is still unwarranted.

So, in the interests of wildlife welfare and to be aware of the conservation values and risks of our observations, we need to be very aware of the potential of unintended consequences when we see and report an uncommon

bird. The added attention given to a sensitive bird, even though the location is well known, may tip the scales of disturbance and result in unintended harm. The following birds are particularly sensitive species, and most public observations should be held with discretion:

- Long-eared Owl
- Nesting secretive marsh birds
- Northern Goshawk (except migration reports)
- Sedge Wren
- Nests of any endangered/threatened species , listed on the Game Commission's website at: <https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/EndangeredandThreatened/Pages/default.aspx>

There are many other issues associated with birding ethics that deserve attention, but here are a few ways to help protect sensitive birds when reporting to eBird (or other outlets):

- Wait until the season is over and the sensitive birds have left before reporting the birds to eBird. You can go back and "edit" your checklists later to include sensitive records after the birds have departed.
- Do not provide explicit coordinates or directions to sensitive records. For instance, you may say that birds were seen at a state park, instead of listing the exact location therein.

## PSO Pileated Quiz

(Answers on page 20)

How well do you know your Pennsylvania warblers?

1. Which species had the fewest confirmed breeding records in our second Breeding Bird Atlas?
2. Which species is often associated with Christmas tree plantations?
3. Which species have Latin scientific names relating to their blue colors? For a bonus, what are these scientific names?
4. Which species would be most likely to use a nest box?
5. Which species did Audubon call the "Carbonated Swamp-Warbler"?

# Birding Groups on Facebook

by Chad Kauffman

For many years, several groups have been very active on Facebook for birding in PA. We first started a group called PA Birders that took a few years to get off the ground, but when it did, it grew quickly. It soon became obvious that it was being taken over by bird photography posts, so we decided it was worthwhile to create a group for that. It has done a wonderful job.

Then we noticed we were getting quite a few “What is this bird?” types of posts, so it made sense to create a group just for that as well. It does very well on its own, too. We also thought it would be worth creating a page for just announcing birding events, meetings, etc., and while that is still not as active as we had hoped, it is doing OK. The groups did so well that I noticed that many other states have followed suit and have asked for advice, since they were having some of the same adventures we were. We have had some great moderators for the groups, too. Some have come and gone for various reasons, but some have stayed. It is a thankless job; it isn’t fun being the Facebook police trying to make the grumpy old birders happy while encouraging and helping the newbie birdwatchers.

Then came 2020, the year of the COVID and shutdown. Our groups have just exploded with newbies coming in, learning about birds, getting involved, etc. The newbie posts started to really take over our groups big-time. We were more lenient on the rules, offering people an outlet for the love of birds that all of us have on various levels. But it was hard for each group to accomplish its mission when the posts of the beginner birders began to bury the posts on advanced observations and discussions and the alerts for notable sightings.

So, a few of us discussed the situation, and I decided that it made more sense to create a new group with stricter rules to stay on focus. So far, the new group has been going great, with no issues of really any substance. I think we have it set up now in a way that birders of all experience levels can enjoy any or all of the groups. Other states had done what we have done with the new group, including the name.

Here is the new name and the rules as stated on the group. If you aren’t on the new group and wish to be, just click “Join,” answer a few questions so we know you are real, and you will be added.

## PA Birds – Notable Sightings & Discussion

This group is a place to post information related to sightings of rare/unusual birds in Pennsylvania, and for discussions relating to notable bird sightings. It is NOT a place to share sightings or photographs of commonly occurring species, or a place to seek basic ID help. Please consider our other groups for those purposes such as:

PA Birders  
PA Birders - Photography  
ID that PA Bird

Less experienced birders are welcome to join and learn, but please refrain from posting content not consistent with the guidelines.

Appropriate posts for this group include:

- Reports of notable (statewide or regionally) bird sightings or unseasonable species occurrences
- Discussion of unusual records
- Advanced ID questions, such as gulls, Empids, etc., particularly for individuals that may be a rare species
- Discussion of large-scale bird movements or weather events that may affect PA
- Requests for info related to specific rarities, access instructions in restricted/private areas, and updates on a continuing rarity (keeping info for a specific bird in a single thread is preferred)
- Priority conservation concern species in PA
- Use your best judgment for other topics that would be of interest to serious birders in the state

Examples of **inappropriate** posts:

- Normal arrival of spring migrants at feeders, such as Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks
- Sharing photos of common species
- ID questions, except advanced discussions, as outlined above
- Birds outside of PA (with the potential exception of something extremely rare in locations very close to PA or an irruption that could lead to PA records)

Please make sure all posts adhere to these guidelines. Posts that do not meet the above criteria will be deleted, and members who repeatedly disregard these criteria will be warned or removed from the group. Don't take it personally; we want this group to serve the needs of

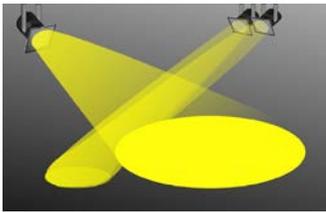
serious birders in Pennsylvania, and there are plenty of other groups to share photos.

All posts should include date and location, including county. If the specific location of a bird cannot be shared (e.g. private property where permission cannot be obtained), it is still acceptable to post the sighting but should include a note explaining why no location was given.

Photographs should always include text providing context about the sighting. Even for continuing rarities,

date and location must be provided with posts or photographs. Please consider keeping information for a specific bird on a single thread so that information is consolidated. It is assumed that members of this group have advanced knowledge of birds, so ornithological terminology and banding codes are acceptable.

Generally, be nice. Be grateful to those who share information about sightings, and do not have unrealistic assumptions about property access or timeliness of posting. Accusatory or otherwise derogatory comments directed at group members will not be tolerated.



## Young PA Birder Spotlight

Teen birders add a wonderful dimension to our PA birding community by sharing their talents and passion for birds with a wider audience. I first met Ashrith a few years ago when he attended the ABA's Camp Avocet for teen birders and was struck by his serious dedication, soaking up all he could learn about birds.

I asked Ashrith to share with you a little about himself, and his love for nature photography. I was inspired to see another young person sparked to learn more about birds through books/ID guides; this is something I hear often from the young people with whom I work.

Ashrith is an active member of a Delaware Valley What's App group, which is where I found him sharing info and seeking to learn more. Please read on to learn more about this astute birder and photographer!

Ashrith Kandula is a 16-year-old avid birdwatcher and nature photographer who resides in Wallingford, Delaware Co., PA. He loves spending as much time as possible outside and usually photographs birds in his yard and in local parks and wildlife refuges. He also spends his summers on national and international trips to see more exotic species.

Ashrith owes his passion for his hobby to a garage sale he attended when he was eight years old. After jumping around and playing with his friends, he came upon a person who was selling two Peterson Wildlife Books. One was about birds; the other, about bees. Each was under one dollar! Awed at the beautiful plumage of the cardinal and buntings on the cover, he immediately chose the bird book. After getting home, he attempted to identify the birds that came to his feeder with his newly acquired field



guide. Although it took him some time to understand that the Tricolored Heron is the same bird as the Louisiana Heron – the rest is history!

Fast forward a few years, and Ashrith became more interested in drawing birds, then photographing them. He discovered digiscoping, that is, the art of holding a phone up to a pair of binoculars to capture close shots. To advance his photography hobby, his parents bought him a Canon Powershot SX530 camera. He played around with it and learned the basics for two years. Aspiring to get sharper shots on his vacations, Ashrith made an upgrade to a Canon 7D Mark II and a 100-400 mm II lens, which he currently uses.

Ashrith says that his dream photography set-up would be a water-drip in the middle of a dry forest. The water would attract many different types of birds, including ones that do not usually visit feeders.

He spends most of his time taking photos on early-morning walks around the neighborhood and at the feeders at his neighbor's house.

(continued on page 19)



# The Raven Reporter

## Tales of Discovery about Pennsylvania Birds



exceptional for a suburban area where there are many birders and a local bird club, but we have a feeling of accomplishment at the Glen. The participants represented a wide variety of people, including several campers who traveled from cities far from the mountain, mostly from the Philadelphia suburbs. The children who attended with their parents were attentive and quietly cooperative for four hours of birding. I did not count, but more women attended than men. As far as I can tell, much of the future of birding apparently lies with women. Members of the Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon, Lycoming County Audubon, and Seven Mountains Audubon have attended, but many attendees seemed unaffiliated with any local bird or nature club.

### Successful Ricketts Glen State Park Bird Walks

Ricketts Glen State Park may be a Pennsylvania Important Bird Area, but it is conveniently located in the middle of nowhere and at least 30 miles from anywhere. So, it may be a favorite place for waterfall trail walkers and kayakers, but not so much for birders. In this way it is like many state parks, game lands, and state forests in rural Pennsylvania. It is chockful of birds and trails but hosts few birders. I can walk dozens of miles on trails and not encounter another person with binoculars.



Doug Gross began leading public bird walks at Ricketts Glen as soon as DCNR said it was OK.

Our bird walks are much more than bird identification exercises. I have developed many talking points about bird identification, behavior, ecology, and conservation to add to the basics. It has been a wonderful opportunity to engage many people with birding and nature study. Bird walks turn into tree identification workshops, discussions about wintering ground threats to birds, lessons on native plants preferred by birds, and spruce forest management opportunity discussions. I would recommend that other birders seize the opportunity that our state parks offer by volunteering to lead bird walks. It is a rewarding experience.

Despite the dire warnings from other birders on the dangers of birding on public land, I continued conducting bird surveys in the park and on nearby game lands throughout the pandemic. I encountered very few people on the park's wide trails, especially in the early days of the pandemic. It was and is easy to comply with physical distancing on lightly used trails. Walking in the woods also proved to be good therapy.

As soon as DCNR allowed, I began leading public bird walks at the park in June, partnering with the park's Environmental Education Specialist, Rhiannon Summers. We led ten walks for the general public with a total of 78 attending these events. That may not be an earth-shattering number, but the group sizes were very manageable, and we had excellent birding experiences. If we include another walk that we led for a scout troop, that figure would increase to 93 people. This would not be

The state parks are underutilized by birders and bird organizations for instruction and outreach. They would be great places to conduct bird skill workshops and other teaching experiences. Pennsylvania Audubon and the PA Game Commission conducted bird monitoring skill workshops for Important Bird Area monitoring several years ago. These workshops were very successful. There are many good reasons to reboot this approach even in the digital age. For no other reason, Pennsylvania is due to conduct another Breeding Bird Atlas soon. Why not begin training birders on how to get involved with such a project and develop their birding skills? There is nothing quite like personal one-to-one mentoring in the field and the small class setting. I know that some clubs have conducted training sessions, but this approach could be much more widespread and done more in partnerships. I propose that the PSO should be more invested in this kind of approach and do it locally with state parks and local clubs.

## Red-breasted Nuthatch Irruption Migration 2020

This year has had many challenges and is a year to forget overall, but it is going to be the year of the little charmers, the Red-breasted Nuthatches. An irruption of Red-breasted Nuthatches is certainly taking place throughout the East including here in Pennsylvania. It is no longer a rumor or a prediction. It is really happening on a grand scale. These little fellows are not just feeder birds. They are conifer lovers and can be found in a variety of forests, often easily reached along roads and trails. The eBird maps show an extensive migration across the Eastern states with Red-breasted Nuthatches traveling into southern New Jersey and other places in high numbers. Purple Finches also may be staging an irruption with some crossbills possibly in the mix. Red Crossbills have been reported in New York State, so they are not far away.

These little songbirds are looking for food, mostly small seeds and insects. This year there are slim pickings for cone seeds. The hemlocks are mostly bare. The little cones of hemlocks house many seeds and are very easy to open if you have an awl-like bill. Hemlock cones are like "candy" for crossbills and other conifer specialists. But, there are very few to feed the many conifer birds. In the mountains, the red spruce cones also are few this year. Even large red spruces that generally produce seed cones are bare. But, this year eastern white pines are producing an abundant seed crop. Even small nuthatches can forage on these big, sappy cones. White pine is also a food source for Red Crossbills (mostly Type 1 birds), chickadees, goldfinches, and others. I have seen many Red-breasted Nuthatches foraging on white pines, especially the large trees with limbs drooping from the weight of hundreds of seed cones. They often will hover-glean the seeds out of the open cones rather than land on the sappy cone, avoiding getting the sticky sap on their little feet. Red-breasted Nuthatches are omnivorous, not seed-specialists, so they also forage on a wide variety of insects on tree bark and will do some flycatching while they are invading the forests around here.

In my experiences, Red-breasted Nuthatches can be fairly common breeders in mature red spruce and eastern hemlock forests one year and then absent or rare in others.



An irruption of Red-breasted Nuthatches is taking place throughout the East.

Photo by Doug Gross

I have seen this phenomenon in boreal conifers and lower elevation evergreen conifer patches including old Christmas tree farms and ornamental or erosion-control plantings. The same may be true with pines. I wonder if Red-breasted Nuthatches also will visit other conifers during this irruption event that may be overlooked by birders. In some places, jack pine, Virginia (scrub) pine, red pine, pitch pine, and scots pine could offer seed cones that nuthatches and other birds might forage. I remember one incident in the early 1980s when a big cone crop of Virginia pines occurred in a Luzerne County forest that Red-breasted Nuthatches had visited in the fall and continued to feed on through the winter. The nuthatches stayed the following spring and nested there with an adequate cone crop to provide them with food. This kind of follow-up nesting might occur in a variety of locations, including pine barrens and conifer evergreen plantings far from other nesting areas. For that reason, it would be interesting for birders to explore some scrub barrens and pine groves this fall, winter, and early spring as well as the "big pine stands." They could discover high densities of nuthatches and perhaps witness breeding activity in new places. And, who knows if the Purple Finches and crossbills also will follow.

## 2020 Boreal Bird Report



Doug photographed this Yellow-bellied Flycatcher male on territory in Coalbed Swamp.

Since the first PBBA, I have been studying the rarest boreal forest birds in the state and reporting on the results. Thanks to the cooperation of the PA Game Commission, I have continued studying Yellow-bellied Flycatchers and Blackpoll Warblers in SGL 57 spruce swamps. Both species are PA-Endangered. In the last few years, I have extended studies to Swainson's Thrush in the Northeast. All of the results of these studies are shared with the appropriate agencies and partners. In 2020, I found Yellow-bellied

Flycatchers only in Coalbed Swamp. This year, I found only two single, unattached males on territory. They sang often and regularly into mid-morning but did not attract a female. I failed to find them in three other conifer forested wetlands where I have found them in previous years. The gradual decline of the females makes me suspect that wintering grounds may be a limiting factor, but this is only a theory. The breeding ground habitat seems secure, but there has also been a pattern of drier, hotter summers. The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher seems on

the brink of extirpation in the state despite the security of recent breeding locations.

Breeding populations of Blackpoll Warblers have been found in a few boreal wetlands in Wyoming and Luzerne Counties. In 2019, I found Blackpoll Warblers in both Coalbed and Tamarack Swamps, but this year I found them singing only in Tamarack Swamp. At least three singing males were there this year, and I confirmed nesting by finding a male carrying food to young in late June. Between Coalbed and Tamarack Swamps, I found more than ten territories (sometimes more than 20) for several years, but the population has shrunk to a much smaller size. I will expand my searches for both species in 2021. I believe that breeding habitat exists in other northern counties, given the characteristics of the wetlands and spruce forests where they have been found.

Swainson's Thrush is a Candidate-Rare species in Pennsylvania, more widespread and common than the previous two species discussed but one of the rarest breeding birds in the state. My studies complement work conducted by David Yeany of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the northwestern counties. I have found clusters of Swainson's Thrushes at a few locations on North Mountain since the 1980s. Searches in 2020 revealed two small clusters of Swainson's Thrushes in Ricketts Glen State Park, both in hemlock woods near



This male Blackpoll Warbler, singing in Tamarack Swamp, was photographed by Doug Gross.



Doug found this Swainson's Thrush nest in Ricketts Glen State Park.

water. They were formerly more widespread. In Ricketts Glen I found an active nest and young birds in other territories. Unfortunately the nest failed, probably due to predation. This year I revisited a remote spruce forest in SGL 57 in the Somer Brook headwaters. I discovered this Swainson's Thrush population in 2002. This year I found at least six active territories with at least three of these producing young. This may be the largest Swainson's Thrush cluster in the northeastern counties. I will monitor this location more closely in 2021 and check a few other locations. Other clusters that I have found in Loyalsock State Forest and SGL 13 seem to have winked out, so the Swainson's Thrush population is not as large as during the 2<sup>nd</sup> PA Breeding Bird Atlas. This bears watching because these boreal species may be sensitive indicators of forest health and the effects of global climate change.

My surveys failed to find any Northern Goshawks where I have found them previously. I am very concerned about the status of this species which has disappeared from former haunts.

Good birding!

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## Plan Now to Attend Our Next PSO Annual Meeting

September 17-19, 2021

Lancaster, PA

Double Tree Resort at Willow Valley

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# Are Aerial Insectivores Being “Bugged Out”?

By Clay Corbin and Victoria Roper

Since 1970, North America has seen a significant decline in avifauna, including more than 528 different bird species spanning nine biomes (e.g. Coasts, Arid Lands, Eastern Forest, Arctic Tundra, Western Forest, Boreal Forest, and Grassland). One way to understand these dynamics is to concentrate on functional feeding groups such as granivores or aerial insectivores. The latter group, comprised of more than thirty species of swifts, nightjars, flycatchers, and swallows, is declining at a faster rate than other groups.

One species of swallow, the Tree Swallow, has experienced a 49% decline since 1966 throughout North America. Interestingly, Pennsylvania lies along the border between increasing and decreasing occupancy trends, and research on Tree Swallow occupancy rates might provide management insights for other aerial insectivores.

The main hypotheses explaining swallow declines are changes in aerial insect phenology, abundance, and availability. In other words, aerial insectivores are being “bugged out.” To get at this question, researchers from Bloomsburg University started several Tree Swallow nest box projects in Columbia and Montour counties in winter 2019. These projects utilize sites at artificial or natural wetlands with about 20 nest boxes at each site. Some of the projects include banding birds to track site fidelity and year-to-year occupancy.

Victoria Roper, a graduate student at Bloomsburg University and recipient of a PSO Student Research Grant, took on a project for a master's degree and performed field studies to examine "the role of artificial and natural wetlands in supporting aerial insectivores, specifically Tree Swallows, the growth rates of chicks in relation to prey abundance, isotopic signatures of chicks and prey," and evaluation of whether the foraging behavior varied across the habitats. Dr. Clay Corbin, a Professor of Biology at Bloomsburg University, led the banding activities for one of the projects. What he found interesting was, “In a single season, Ms. Roper



demonstrated a shift from aquatic to terrestrial food sources for this population of Tree Swallows, and Dipterans seem to be driving that shift.”

The study demonstrates that Tree Swallows attempting to time reproductive events to pulses of aquatic emergent insects are more susceptible to trophic mismatches compared to those trying to time reproduction to peak prey availability. These results can serve as a baseline for future trophic mismatch studies on avian reproduction, particularly aerial insectivores, with terrestrial and aquatic feeding options. Furthermore, Roper found that Diptera, with aquatic and terrestrial emerging species, are the most abundant food item in the habitat of these swallows. They are emerging earlier in the swallow breeding season compared to

2006 and 2008. This has major implications for swallow population dynamics.

Ms. Roper has presented preliminary findings at the American Ornithological Society Conference in Anchorage, Alaska, in 2019. She has now completed requirements for her Master's Degree at Bloomsburg with a thesis, "Tree Swallow Breeding Biology and the Phenology of Aquatic Emergent Prey in Artificial and Natural Wetlands." As part of the requirement for receiving the PSO Student

Research Grant, she will be submitting an article to the *Pennsylvania Birds* journal with more details of her research.

Currently, she is a Ph.D. student at Oklahoma State University in the Department of Integrative Biology with Dr. Jennifer Grindstaff who works on Zebra Finches and Eastern Bluebirds. Roper will be continuing her research on aerial insectivores and studying Eastern Bluebirds.

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# Pennsylvania Ornithological Research

Most PSO members are aware of the pioneering studies of the Carolina and Black-capped Chickadee hybrid zone in eastern Pennsylvania by Robert L. Curry and his students at Villanova University. His 2015 banquet program introduced the research in detail.

During two decades of research under Bob's guidance, we have learned much about the factors that are causing the hybrid zone to advance northward and to maintain its narrow belt of interbreeding across eastern Pennsylvania.

Curry aptly titled a 2005 paper in *The Auk* "Hybridization in chickadees: much to learn from familiar birds" (*The Auk* 122:747-758).

Indeed. While Curry's teams have been advancing knowledge, some less publicized but important research has been progressing in the Biological Sciences Department at Lehigh University. Amber M. Rice and her students have added further findings to our knowledge of the complex behavioral, genetic, and environmental factors that characterize the hybrid zone in eastern Pennsylvania.

For example, in 2015 Michael A. McQuillan and Rice analyzed effects of climate change and interactions between two species as the hybrid zone advances northward (*Ecology and Evolution* 5: 5120-5137). The findings suggest that both of those factors are involved in a northward shift of the Carolina range limit and a corresponding retraction northward of the Black-capped range limit.

In 2018 McQuillan, Timothy C. Roth II, Alex V. Huynh, and Rice conducted a remarkable behavioral investigation demonstrating that hybrid chickadees performed significantly worse than their parental species on cognitive traits



Robert L. Curry and his students at Villanova pioneered studies on the hybridization of Carolina and Black-capped Chickadees. Mike Fialkovich photographed this Carolina Chickadee in Allegheny County.



This Black-capped Chickadee was photographed in Indiana County by Roger Higbee.

involving learning and memory (*Evolution* 72: 1155-1164).

The Lehigh research continues. In 2019 Huynh and Rice reported evidence of something new after studies conducted in the hybrid zone at Nockamixon State Park, DeSales University, Lehigh University, and Jacobsburg State Park. They demonstrated that the two species' different olfactory characters influence their mating preferences (*Ecology and Evolution* 9:9671-9683).

Olfaction refers to the sense of smell. Their results suggest that, as in many non-avian species, different species' odors may be an important mating cue for selecting the "correct" species mate. To the authors' knowledge, this is the first time a relationship of aroma and mate choice has been investigated in an avian hybrid belt.

Huynh and Rice used sophisticated methods to extract and analyze DNA to determine the species' and hybrids' genetic ancestry and to

characterize the aromatic differences. Next, they analyzed males' and females' odor preferences.

The results: Males of both species showed significant preferences for female odors of their own species. Likewise, females showed significant preferences for males of their own species. The authors describe their experiments as indicating "a clear preference for con-specific whole-body odors in both species of chickadees."

In this case, mate preference for one's own species could be a key pre-breeding barrier against hybridization. Nevertheless, despite that preference, hybridization persists. Preferences are not necessarily 100% successful.

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Did you know that birds in general have more feathers in winter than in summer? A Carolina Chickadee collected in winter sported 1,704 feathers while another collected in summer had only 1,104.

# Conservation Chat Room

## Wildlife Corridors in Pennsylvania



I was invited by the Endangered Species Coalition (ESC) in early June to participate in a webinar called, “Connecting Wildlife, Connecting Communities” on June 11, 2020. ESC was interested in hearing how conservation organizations in Pennsylvania are working to protect wildlife

corridors in our state.

Of course, I said, “Yes,” as participation allowed me to promote three non-profits that I’m involved with that are concerned about wildlife and habitat protection: the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology (PSO), Juniata Valley Audubon Society, and Save Our Allegheny Ridges.

In the webinar, I shared three examples of wildlife corridors that are under threat from industrial development: Dunning Mountain, Wild Creek Watershed, and Broad Mountain.

**Dunning Mountain:** The Dunning Mountain Forest Natural Heritage Area on Dunning/Evitt’s Mountain in Bedford County has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) as a Natural Heritage Area of GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE. This area is a part of a long mountain range in the ridge and valley province in central PA – essentially part of a wildlife corridor. This intact forest is at risk because of a wind project proposed for the top of the mountain right through the heart of this natural area.

**Wild Creek Watershed** in Carbon County is a GLOBALLY RARE HABITAT and the watershed is classified as EXCEPTIONAL VALUE. This is the highest watershed rating designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Wild Creek Watershed is at risk because both the East Penn Pipeline and the Penn Forest Wind Project will fragment this extensive forest –which also supplies water to thousands of people in the City of Bethlehem. Ironically, the City of Bethlehem opposes the pipeline, but leased their forested land for the wind project.

**Broad Mountain** in Packer Township, Carbon County is the site for a proposed wind turbine project.

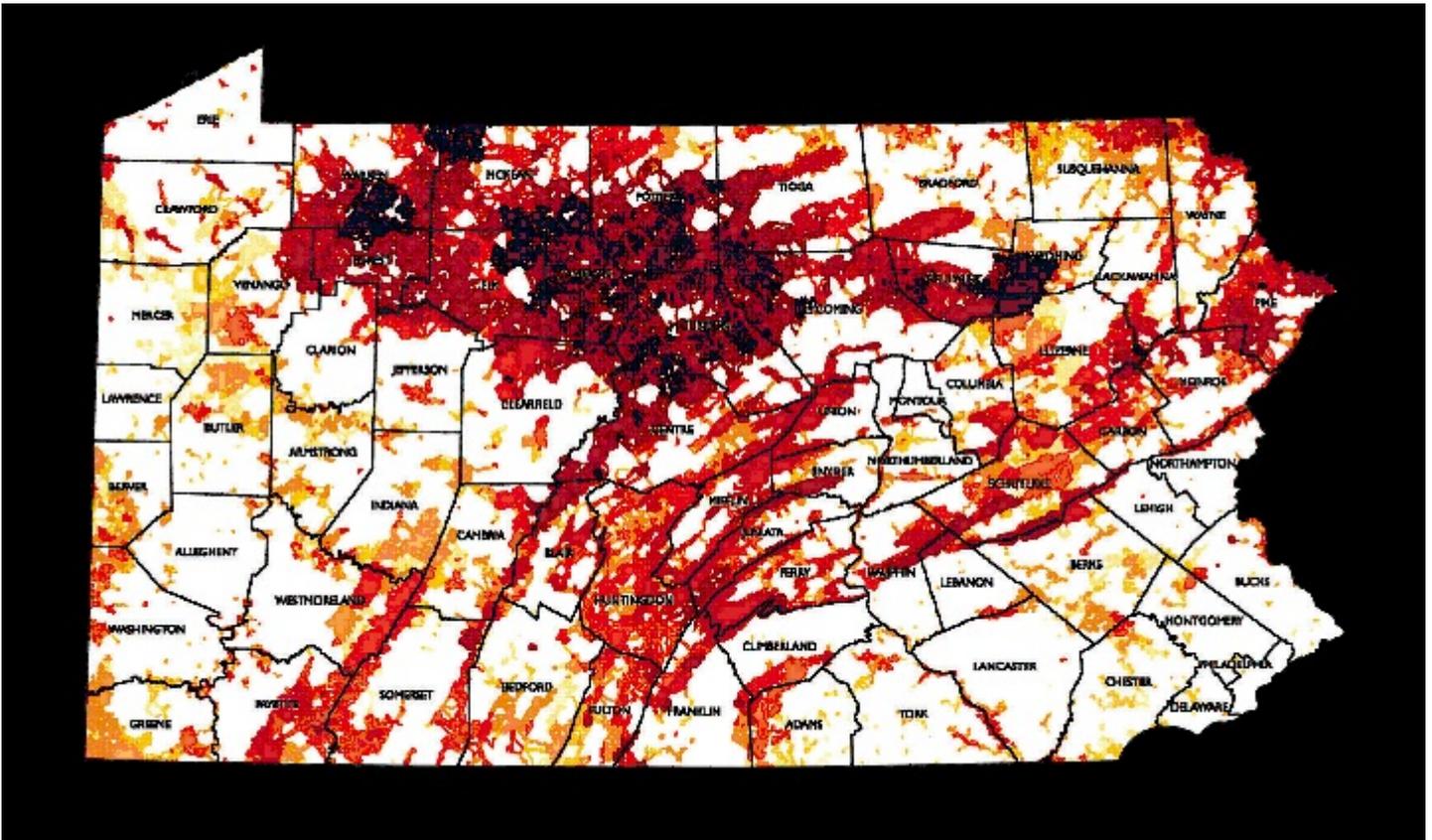
Broad Mountain contains 5 *Exceptional Value Watersheds* and 3 *High Quality Coldwater Watersheds* and all would be impacted by the proposed wind project.

As part of the webinar I was asked, “**What steps can individuals take to support wildlife corridors?**” I offered three suggestions:

1. Read Dr. Doug Tallamy’s two books: *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature’s Best Hope*. *Nature’s Best Hope* promotes the concept that backyards should be connected natural habitats which sustain native plants, insects, and birds.
2. Find out about wildlife (and plant) corridors in your area. Very simply, these are natural areas that connect ecosystems. Think big: forest, river, stream, riparian buffer, but also think small: wildlife crossing under or over a highway, fish ladders, even a culvert designed for aquatic organism passage. Consider your backyard and your neighbors’ yards. Are there trees and native shrubs that help them connect with each other? In *Nature’s Best Hope*,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tallamy expounds on the importance of creating a “home-grown natural park” that would facilitate wildlife movements.  
  
You’ve probably visited some core areas that provide connections for wildlife and plants: Pennsylvania Wilds, Laurel Highlands, South Mountain, Schuylkill Highlands, to name a few.
3. Let your state legislators know that you are in favor of House Resolution 670. Ask them to cosponsor it. House Resolution 670 is a pretty simple ask:

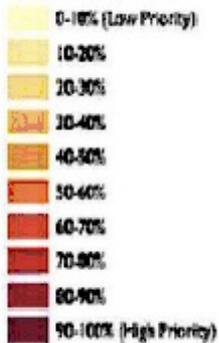
*“A Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the feasibility of establishing conservation corridors in this Commonwealth.”*

HR 670 has bipartisan support, but it’s still in the Tourism and Recreational Development Committee. It was introduced by Pennsylvania Representative Mary Jo Daley and posted on January 14, 2020. Please take a few minutes to call or email your state rep. Tell them you support HR 670 and ask them to cosponsor it.



### Cores & Connectors

#### Connectivity Value



Believe me, there is a lot of sweat equity and hardcore science involved as our biologists work hard to recognize connections that are at increased risk due to climate change. I reached out to David Yeany II, Avian Ecologist for the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program at the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. David is a PSO member and is active on a number of committees, including the Conservation Committee.

David was part of a PNHP team that developed “Priorities for Climate Change Connectivity in Pennsylvania.” It’s not just a report to be printed and assigned to a dusty shelf in a planner’s office. This is a dataset that should be used in conservation planning as a spatial tool to target important wildlife corridors.

The visual reference is the Map of “Cores and Connectors,” which shows colored areas prioritized for climate change connectivity. You can see the map in color on page 19 in the PNHP 2019 Annual Report: : <http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/docs/PNHP-2019-AnnualReport.pdf>, and a feature article was written about

the project in the PNHP Wild Heritage News Summer 2020 newsletter:

<http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/docs/2020%20Q2%20PNHP%20newsletter.pdf>.

Even in black and white, you can tell that the areas in darker gray have higher priority for conservation in relation to climate change.

The model developed by PNHP assigned different weights to factors that contributed to the project. The highest weight (50%) was given to **Regional Flow**, based on the Nature’s Network flow analysis of predicted species’ movement patterns. **Resilience** counted for 20% of the model, which showed how different parts of the landscape were capable of adapting to climate change. Equal priority was given to three factors that each contributed to 10% of the model: **Landscape Condition, Geophysical Settings, and Natural Heritage Areas.** <sup>2</sup>

Additionally, the model includes information on ecological systems and representative species that each core or connector is predicted to be most important for supporting.

This data should be useful at different levels:

1. **Local conservation decisions** in a municipality can be prioritized based on regional climate

change connectivity. For example, the model identifies natural areas that are vulnerable to disturbances.

2. **Land protection** can be coordinated to maximize positive regional impact to wildlife movement as climate conditions change. Stewardship and conservation efforts on private lands can be promoted, as well.
3. **Long term strategic planning:** The dataset can be used by planners to develop sustainable land use and greenway plans to achieve regional conservation goals.

Scientists have already collected evidence that some wildlife and plant species are impacted by climate change. The more core habitat and connectors that are present in the landscape, the greater chance that species will “find” the habitat they need for survival. It’s no surprise that Pennsylvania’s “songbird nursery” in the northern tier also contains the highest number of cores and connectors. Let’s

ask our county planners and other professionals to use this important data for future conservation planning.

I’m also happy to report that PSO, Juniata Valley Audubon Society, and Save Our Allegheny Ridges are now member organizations of the Endangered Species Coalition. We will support their programs to protect endangered species and their habitats.

1. Tallamy, Douglas W. Nature’s Best Hope. Portland, Oregon. Timber Press. 2019.
2. Yeany, D., C. Tracey, A. Johnson, and J. Wagner. 2020. Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Priorities for climate change connectivity in Pennsylvania. GIS data product for Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, WPC-TA-038.

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## Pennsylvania 2019 Bird Lists Report

Compiled by Andy Keister

At the conclusion of 2019, the number of birders who have reported PA Life Lists of 300 species or greater remains at 93. The number of birders with PA Life Lists of 350 species or greater also remains unchanged at 27. As last reported in 2018, Devich Farbotnik has recorded 396. Other birders have eBird lists of more than 400 species but have not reported their numbers to me. The total number of birders with unassisted Life Lists of 300 species or greater increased to 12. For 2019, the year’s high Annual List was reported by Zach Millen with 282 species followed by Andy Keister with 258 species. Similar to the life lists, several individuals recorded more species through eBird in 2019 but did not report those numbers to me for inclusion within this report.

County lifelisters who have recorded the most species in their respective counties and have reported new species for 2019 include Geoff Malosh who has recorded 283 species for Allegheny County, David Hawk who has recorded 281 species in Carbon County, Andy Keister who has recorded 218 species in Columbia County, Al Guarente who reached the milestone of 300 species in Delaware County, David Kyler who has recorded 277 species in Huntingdon County, Fritz Brock who has recorded 281 species in Lehigh County, Bobby Brown

who has recorded 264 species in Lycoming County, Greg Grove who has recorded 215 species in Mifflin County, Andy Keister who has recorded 238 species in Montour County, Arlene Koch who reached the milestone of 300 species in Northampton County, Andy Keister who recorded 243 species in Northumberland County, and Dick Cleary who recorded 261 species in York County.

In annual county birding, Ryan Johnson set the new high record for Wayne County at 125 species. Thanks to Chad Kauffman’s efforts to bird Snyder County, the first reports of greater than 100 species in a year included Andy Keister with 186 species, Waylon Martin with 178 species, and Chad Kauffman with 176 species. Other birders had similar or higher numbers in Snyder County in 2019 but did not report their lists for this report.

A total of 34 individuals submitted list information or Bird of the Year votes for 2019. They include: David Kyler, Trudy Kyler, Bruce Carl, Jeffrey Hall, Greg Grove, Bobby Brown, Dave DeReamus, Zach Millen, Al Guarente, Wayne Laubscher, Deb Grove, Michael David, Chuck Berthoud, Ryan Tomazin, Geoff Malosh, John Flannigan, Roy Ickes, Dean Newhouse, Chad Kauffman, John Snarey, Fritz Brock, Ronald Leberman, Richard

Nugent, Kurt Schwarz, Andy Keister, David Hauk, Mark Vass, Arlene Koch, Carol Hildebrand, Waylon Martin, Carl Garner, Thomas Reeves, Dick Cleary, and Ryan Johnson. This is a substantial decrease from last year and I hope to put more effort into soliciting reports from birders in 2020.

### The Bird of the Year 2019

A total of 13 birders voted for 17 different species as Bird of the Year for 2019. A total of three points were awarded for a first place vote, two points were awarded for a second place vote and one point was awarded for a third place vote. Competition was tight this year and **Snail Kite** (11 points) edged out **Varied Thrush** (10

points) and **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** (8 points) as Bird of the Year. Voting is always impacted by several factors. Snail Kite seemed the obvious choice. however, the bird was a one-day wonder, seen by few people, and wasn't as heavily publicized as some of the other rare birds this year. The remaining votes included Green-tailed Towhee (6 points), Western Meadowlark (5 points), Brown Booby (4 points), Pacific Loon (4 points), Anna's Hummingbird (4 points), Hudsonian Godwit (3 points), Loggerhead Shrike (3 points), Long-eared Owl (3 points), Yellow-crowned Night Heron (3 points), Evening Grosbeak (2 points), Common Raven (2 points), Ash-throated Flycatcher (1 point), Prothonotary Warbler (1 point) and Long-tailed Duck (1 point).

**Note:** Column 1 is each birder's rank; Column 2 is the number of species reported in PA; Column 3 is the year in which the number of species noted was reported.

### PA Life Lists

1	396	Devich Farbotnik	2018	33	340	Richard Timm	2011
2	393	Barbara Haas	2018	33	340	Jerry McWilliams	2018
3	392	Franklin Haas	2018	33	340	David Kyler	2019
4	389	Dave DeReamus	2019	36	338	Jan Witmer	1997
5	386	Peter Robinson	2018	36	338	Richard Colyer	2000
6	384	Eric Witmer	2018	36	338	Andy Keister	2019
7	381	Tom Garner	2018	39	337	John Miller	1997
8	379	Al Guarente	2019	39	337	Mike Epler	2018
9	376	Ken Lebo	2018	39	337	Dick Cleary	2019
10	375	Ronald Leberman	2018	42	336	William Stocku	1997
11	373	Geoff Malosh	2019	42	336	Mark Vass	2019
12	371	Jason Horn	2002	42	336	Wayne Laubscher	2019
12	371	Arlene Koch	2019	45	335	Matt Wlasniewski	2012
14	370	Rick Wiltraut	2006	45	335	Chuck Berthoud	2019
15	369	Randy C. Miller	2016	47	334	Chad Kauffman	2019
15	369	Jonathan Heller	2018	48	332	William Murphy	2000
17	362	Nick Pulcinella	2013	49	330	Billy Weber	2011
18	361	Robert Schutsky	2011	49	330	Greg Grove	2018
18	361	Harold Lebo	2012	51	329	Paul Schwalbe	1998
18	361	Bruce Carl	2019	51	329	Ian Gardner	2017
21	360	Bernard Morris	2011	53	328	Margaret Higbee	2013
21	360	Chuck Chalfant	2016	54	327	Glenna Schwalbe	1998
21	360	Michael Schall	2018	54	327	Steve Santner	1999
24	359	Michael David	2019	54	327	Trudy Kyler	2019
25	358	Steve Farbotnik	2006	57	326	Russ States	2015
26	354	John Fedak	2006	58	324	Harry Franzen	1996
27	353	Mike Fialkovich	2018	58	324	Aden Troyer	2013
28	349	Fritz Brock	2019	58	324	Timothy Becker	2017
29	346	Jerry Book	2000	61	322	Tom Clauser	2012
29	346	Joyce Hoffmann	2004	62	321	Bill Oyler	2017
29	346	Shannon Thompson	2015	62	321	Deborah Grove	2019
32	345	Bill Etter	2017	64	319	John Ginaven	1998

65	318	Phillips Street	1999	118	285	Armas Hill	1996
65	318	Zachary Millen	2019	118	285	Neal Thorpe	1997
67	317	Matthew Spence	2013	120	284	James Gray	1983
68	316	Alex Lamoreaux	2014	121	283	Kerry Grim	1998
69	315	Evelyn Kopf	1995	121	283	Scott Bills	2018
69	315	Drew Weber	2011	123	282	John Billings	1998
71	314	Walter Shaffer	1999	123	282	Dick Byers	2002
72	313	Harold Morrin	1996	125	278	James Baird	1981
72	313	David McNaughton	2013	125	278	Merrill Wood	1991
72	313	Ted Nichols II	2017	125	278	Gerry Boltz	2018
75	312	John Salvetti	2011	128	277	Bonnie Baird	1981
75	312	Skip Conant	2013	129	276	Randi Gerrish	2009
77	311	Dana Shaffer	1999	129	276	Bobby Brown	2019
77	311	Don Henise	2000	131	274	Gloria Lamer	1992
79	309	Richard Rehrig	2016	131	274	Sarah Gerrish	2009
79	309	Carl Garner	2017	131	274	Neil Troyer	2013
81	308	Robyn Henise	2000	134	273	Katrina Knight	1999
81	308	Mike Weible	2007	135	272	Scott Kinzey	1999
81	308	Roger Higbee	2008	135	272	Bob Machesney	2005
84	307	Ernest Schiefer	2000	135	272	Pamela Fisher	2009
85	306	David Yeany II	2016	135	272	Nathan Fronk	2012
86	305	Gene Wilhelm	1992	139	271	James Flynn	1997
87	304	David Hauk	2019	140	270	Barry Reed	2010
88	302	Sam Stull	1985	140	270	Carol Hildebrand	2019
88	302	Edward Pederson	1998	142	268	Sam Sinderson	2005
88	302	Rick Koval	2004	143	267	Harry Henderson	1991
91	301	Mark McConaughy	2015	143	267	Brian Quindlen	2015
92	300	Larry Lewis	1988	145	266	Joe Meloney	1994
92	300	Dave Rieger	2012	145	266	Lewis Grove	2010
94	299	Keith Richards	1982	147	265	Marjorie Howard	2008
95	298	George Malosh	2003	147	265	John Carter	2017
95	298	Allen Schweinsberg	2014	149	262	Theodore Drozdowski	2005
95	298	Richard Nugent	2017	149	262	Jeff Payne	2008
98	297	Allan Keith	1998	151	260	Dennis Miller	1999
98	297	Jim Dunn	2014	151	260	Retta Payne	2008
98	297	Dan Richards	2017	151	260	Martin Page	2014
101	296	Ed Kwater	1996	154	259	Linda McWilliams	1992
101	296	Bill Keim	2013	154	259	Eugene Zielinski	2000
101	296	Joseph Verica	2017	154	259	Jeffrey Hall	2018
104	295	Frank Windfelder	1998	157	258	Steve Graff	2000
104	295	J. Kenneth Gabler	2002	157	258	Jeffrey Wentz	2002
106	294	James Baxter	1986	159	257	Russell Ryan	1993
106	294	Terence Schiefer	1999	160	256	Ted Grisez	1996
106	294	William Reid	2001	161	255	Nick Kerlin	2010
106	294	Gary Edwards	2014	161	255	Flo McGuire	2014
110	293	John Peplinski	1994	161	255	Sandy Lockerman	2014
111	291	Thomas Reeves	2017	161	255	Bruce Johnson	2018
112	290	David Abbott	1998	165	254	Roy Ickes	2018
112	290	Chuck Tague	1999	165	254	Dean Newhouse	2019
114	289	Kevin Crilley	1998	167	253	Scott Bastian	1999
115	288	Ross Gallardy	2006	167	253	Thomas Ford-Hutch.	2006
116	287	Dustin Welch	2011	167	253	Kevin Fryberger	2010
116	287	Brian Byrnes	2018	170	252	Evan Houston	2017
				170	252	Ryan Tomazin	2019

172	251	Brendyn Baptiste	2017
173	250	Stanley Glowacki	2002
174	247	Andy Wilson	2014
175	245	Bill Reddinger	1999
175	245	Robert Frantz	2000
175	245	Paul Mauss	2018
178	244	Harvey Troyer	1999
179	243	Grant Stevenson	2012
180	242	Walter Fye	1997
180	242	Jerry Troyer	1999
180	242	Marvin Byler	2005
180	242	Gordon Dimmig	2012
184	241	Anthony Ford-Hutch.	2012
185	240	Dale Gearhart	2000
186	239	Adam Miller	2000
187	237	Jerry Skinner	2007
187	237	Michael Defina	2015
187	237	John Flannigan	2017
187	237	Kurt Schwarz	2019
191	235	Glenn Czulada	2005
192	234	Christopher Payne	2008
193	232	Joe Strasser	1994
193	232	Voni Strasser	1994
195	231	Larry Brown	1998
195	231	Jim Mountjoy	2000
197	230	Brian Raicich	2013
197	230	Karol Pasquinelli	2018
199	227	Mike Ward	2010
199	227	David Trently	2013
201	226	Eli Troyer	1999
201	226	Stan Kotala	2001
201	226	Leonard Hess	2003
204	224	Arlene Brown	1998
205	223	Pamela Woodman	1993
205	223	Jim McVoy	2007
207	222	Linda Hess	2003
207	222	Joseph Greco	2008
209	220	Jon Dunn	2004
210	219	Ann Pettigrew	1996
210	219	Daniel Snell	2000
212	218	Helena Kotala	2007
213	213	Richard Murphy	1999
214	211	Frank Izaguirre	2013
215	210	Gregg Gorton	2001
215	210	Chad Hutchinson	2015
217	206	Benjamin Israel	2000
217	206	Dennis Weaver	2000
219	205	Jeff Michaels	2005
220	202	Waylon Martin	2019
221	200	Fred Crowley	1995
222	199	Candy Krenzer	1999
222	199	Ryan Johnson	2019
224	197	Patrick O'Donnell	2008

225	186	John Snarey	2019
226	180	Thomas Mason	1999
227	170	Jim Ridolfi	2016
228	168	Elmer Brenneman	2010
229	153	Douglas Anderson	2003
230	106	Rachael Shapiro	2011

**Special thanks to Andy Keister for tabulating all of the data and producing it in usable form for the newsletter and the website. More extensive lists are available on the PSO website at (<http://www.pabirds.org/birdlists/BirdLists2019.pdf>).**

**Now is also the time to start compiling your lists for 2020; plan to submit your totals to Andy Keister ([akeister110@gmail.com](mailto:akeister110@gmail.com)) by January 15, 2021.**

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## Young PA Birder Spotlight

(continued from page 8)

Although Ashrith claims that he likes all birds when asked what his favorite bird is, he particularly likes the King-of-Saxony Bird-of-Paradise. The long white plumes and swinging dance of this species is astounding, he asserts.

While Ashrith is passionate about birds, he would like to keep photography as a hobby. After taking a science major in college and finding a job, he wants to travel widely and further inspire other birders.

– Holly Merker  
Chester County  
PSO Education Committee Chairperson



## PSO Newsletter

This newsletter is published four times a year by the Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology. To renew your membership, either pay on line or send your check made payable to "PSO" to:

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Tony Bruno photographed this gorgeous Prairie Warbler in Indiana County.

## Answers to Bird Quiz

(page 6)

1. Blackpoll
2. Prairie
3. Blue-winged (*cyanoptera*), Black-throated Blue (*caerulescens*), Cerulean (*cerulea*)
4. Prothonotary
5. Nobody knows

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