



March 19th Program - Vernal Pools



Vernal ponds support a wide variety of living organisms and go through dramatic seasonal changes. Dr. Tim Maret of Shippensburg University has been studying vernal ponds in Pennsylvania for over 12 years. During his presentation, we will explore the annual cycle of vernal ponds and take a closer look at their interesting inhabitants.

As always, meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. with refreshments and social time followed by announcements, with the program starting at 7:30 p.m.

The programs are free and open to the public. See page 2 for directions.

Electronic Version of Kingfisher Courier Newsletter Available

Recognizing a national trend of organizations converting from hardcopies of their newsletters to electronic versions, the Appalachian Audubon Society (AAS) would like to offer you an option of receiving the Kingfisher Courier newsletter by e-mail. We will initially try two methods to see which is preferred by our members. If you decide to receive the newsletter electronically, you will receive an email notice of the newsletter's posting to our website, rather than the monthly paper version mailed to your home. The newsletter will also be attached in pdf format to the e-mail. You will have the option of (1) opening the attachment or you may (2) follow the hyperlink within the text of the email to the club's website where you can download and/or view the current and previous newsletters. This will result in a significant cost savings to the chapter, so the AAS board is encouraging all of our members to sign up for this service.

In order to initiate this service, simply send an email from the account that you wish to receive the email notice to appaudubonsoc@yahoo.com. Please include your name in the text of the email.

Please note that your email address will not be sold or provided to others, not even the National Audubon office, as a result of signing up for this service.



Thank you very much for considering this option. If you have any questions, please send an e-mail to appaudubonsoc@yahoo.com or call Ed Smith at 717-960-9441.

Appalachian Audubon Society (AAS) is a National Audubon Society chapter. *Kingfisher Courier* (copyright AAS; please request reprint permission) is a membership benefit, published monthly, September to May, by AAS: P.O. Box 15123, Harrisburg, PA 17105-5123. Email submissions to editor by the 10th of the month prior to desired publication (files <100KB requested; otherwise contact editor). Editor & Board reserve publication decisions, per chapter mission/space available.

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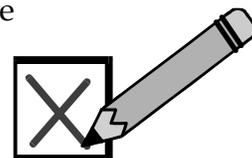
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ATTENTION: The deadline for AAS newsletter article submission has been moved up to the 10th of the month. Thanks.

Nominations Requested

AAS By-Laws encourage all chapter members to make suggestions for new Officers and Directors to replace those whose terms are coming to a close in May. This year we need to find a new Vice President, Treasurer, and three Directors. If you would like to become involved in the work of the chapter in any of these capacities, or would like to suggest someone that you think would be well qualified, please pass the information on to any person on the Nominating Committee – Paul Zeph at pzeph@state.pa.us, Holly Smith at hsmamabear@embarqmail.com or Lorrie Preston at mitandpak@aol.com. We also welcome volunteers on our standing committees, so let us know if you are interested.



Appalachian Audubon monthly (Sept-May) programs normally take place on the 3rd Thursday of each month in Christ Presbyterian Church, 421 Deerfield Road, in the Allendale neighborhood of Camp Hill, at 7:30 p.m. Exceptions are announced in this newsletter, as are field trips and other activities.

PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Directions: Take New Cumberland exit off I-83; cross Carlisle Road. Turn left onto Allendale Way; take first left at Deerfield Road (from the south, take New Cumberland exit, turn left onto Carlisle Road, left onto Cedar Cliff Road, left on Allendale Way, then left onto Deerfield Road) to the church.

AUDUBON BUS TRIP

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN BY APRIL 8

NAME(s) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

LUNCH CHOICE--check preference and indicate quantity if more than one

_____ Turkey Cranberry Wrap
_____ Monster Veggie
_____ Good, Old Fashioned Tuna Hero

Mail completed form and payment of \$45.00 per person (check payable to Appalachian Audubon Society) to Lorrie Preston, 3904 Chippenham Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.

John James Audubon--Part II--Mill Grove Tour and Nature Walk

You are invited to join AAS and our host, Walt Pomeroy, an expert on John James Audubon's life, on **Saturday, April 25, 2009** for a day-long trip to Audubon's first American home, Mill Grove, in Audubon, PA. We will celebrate Audubon's 224th birthday with a guided tour of this nationally registered historic home, now a museum with an extensive collection of his art and wild-life. Over a catered sack lunch, we will enjoy a special presentation on raptors, and later will have the opportunity to view a juried wildlife art exhibit in the barn. Wear comfortable shoes so we can enjoy the beautiful 70 acre grounds with 5 miles of walking trails. We will plan to leave Mill Grove at 4:00 p.m. to return home.

For your convenience, our group will travel by bus to Mill Grove. We will meet at 7:20 a.m. near the Sovereign Bank, in front of Boscov's at the Camp Hill Mall, and will have a second pick up for east shore residents in the parking lot of Wolf's Furniture, 4661 Lindle Rd., Harrisburg at about 7:50 a.m. Cost of this trip is \$45.00 per person, which includes travel (180 miles round trip), lunch, and admission fees. Please fill out the form above or contact Judy Bowman (761-3815 or jbowman@messiahvillage.com) or Lorrie Preston (732-5615 or mitandpak@aol.com) for further information or visit http://pa.audubon.org/centers_mill_grove.html.

Save the Trees! Save the Environment!

Did you know that over 19 BILLION catalogs are mailed each year in the United States? That equates to 53 MILLION trees, and lots of water and energy used to produce them. And most of those catalogs are unwanted in the first place and end up in the trash or recycling bin. But with a simple 10 minute session on your computer, you can make a difference by canceling your unwanted catalogs. Just go to www.catalogchoice.org. This website will ask you to create a profile and select the catalogs that you no longer want to receive. It takes about 10 weeks to take effect and you can opt back in the mailing list at any time if you change your mind. Check out this video clip from the "Today" show to see the positive difference this can make for our environment, and see how some kids challenged their classmates to find out who could cancel the most catalogs. <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21134540/>



Check out these Neat Activities

"A Visit with Henry David Thoreau," 4/17 and 18, Gamut Classic Theatre, Strawberry Square. Sponsored by the Ned Smith Center, www.nedsmithcenter.org or (717)692-3699.

The Appalachian Forest School has an awesome selection of experiences in nature. A complete course listing can be found at www.highlandssanctuary.org/WE/AFS.htm.



Please Join us for the Annual AAS Banquet

Thursday, May 21, 2009

(Reservations Required! Return form by May 15th)

Appetizers and Silent Auction	6:00 p.m.
Buffet Dinner	6:45 p.m.
Election of Board Members	7:45 p.m.
Program	8:00 p.m.



NEW LOCATION - RADISSON PENN HARRIS HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

Ballroom South, 1150 Camp Hill Bypass, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Program - "*Of a Feather: A (Brief) History of American Birding*"
By Scott Weidensaul, Internationally Respected Author and Naturalist

Join famous author and naturalist Scott Weidensaul as he traces the unpredictable history of bird study in America. Based on his new book *Of a Feather*, this whirlwind history shows how ornithology and birding grew from eccentric hobbies into something so completely mainstream they're now (almost) cool.

Silent auction to benefit our scholarship and educational programs. Please contact Susan Miller at 697-6696 or millerscorner@msn.com if you have nature items to donate for the silent auction.

AAS Annual Banquet—May 21, 2009

Please make reservations by May 15, 2009

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Please make reservations for _____ Adults or Youth aged 12 years and up at \$25.00 each
Total included: \$ _____

Send this form along with your check payable to AAS or Appalachian Audubon Society to:

Appalachian Audubon Society
c/o Ellen Zeph, Treasurer
18 Glendale Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Winter Birding - Lots of Northern Visitors

While most winters are usually not very exciting times to look for birds, the winter of 2008-2009 has been an exception. Large numbers of birds from the far north have come to Pennsylvania. This began in early fall and accelerated as winter approached. Lack of food up north – mainly very poor cone crops on the conifers – sent many birds, mainly finches, south from Canada. The Christmas Bird Counts held in December and early January recorded record numbers of American Goldfinches, unprecedented numbers of Pine Siskins and fair numbers of White-winged Crossbills. We are used to seeing Goldfinches during the winter, but several counts more than doubled their record number. In some winters Pine Siskins can be found, but the numbers this year are truly amazing. HUNDREDS were found on most of the counts and many people have reported 100 or more regularly coming to their feeders.



All of the local counts detected White-winged Crossbills, something which has never happened before. We had a decent White-winged Crossbill invasion ten years ago, but where that invasion involved lots of birds in a few selected locations, the crossbills this time have blanketed the entire state. By early February, White-winged Crossbills had been reported in almost every Pa. county, a really astounding event. White-winged Crossbills generally do not come to bird feeders. They like cones on conifers, especially smaller cones - Hemlocks, and smaller spruces. Many of the Hemlocks in our local area don't have a lot of cones, but most of the spruces have a bumper crop. Cemeteries, golf courses and many backyards have perfect habitat for crossbills. While crossbills can be very noisy in flight, when they are feeding they can be fairly quiet and easily overlooked. Their call has been described as a chattering or a typewriter-like call. It is very distinctive and fairly noisy, carrying for a fair distance. When they are silent, scanning spruces with lots of cones can be productive; sometimes they will sit on the very top of a spruce before feeding on the cones. Sometime in March or April the crossbills should begin moving back north. Interestingly, crossbills have been recorded breeding in EVERY month of the year, but so far there haven't been any such reports in Pennsylvania.



Another northern visitor that has appeared in our area this year is the Rough-legged Hawk. While a couple are usually found in most winters in our area, there have been more numerous reports this year. A bird of the tundra, the Rough-leg comes south in search of food. In winters with more snow the Rough-legs will come farther south. They are usually found in agricultural areas. They frequently hover, like an American Kestrel, but also hunt from poles or trees. Frequently they will sit on the very top of a small tree - something a Red-tailed Hawk usually will not do. Once the snow melts away, or by mid-March, most Rough-legged Hawks will move back north.

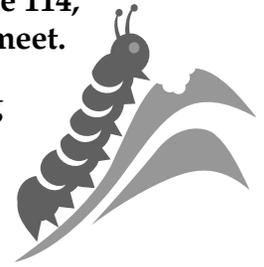


This article was written by **Ramsay Koury**, past AAS President and expert birder. Watch for his *Kingfisher Queries* column, which will begin in next month's issue of *Kingfisher Courier*.

Looking Ahead - April's Program to be Held at the Mechanicsburg Middle School

Appalachian Audubon is very excited to invite you to attend our April 16th program meeting which will be hosted in partnership with the Mechanicsburg Parks and Recreation Department. **The event will be held at the Mechanicsburg Middle School auditorium, Route 114, Mechanicsburg, instead of the Christ Presbyterian Church where we usually meet.**

We have a very special evening planned, and the community as a whole is being invited to join us. Dr. Douglas Tallamy, Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology from the University of Delaware, will be our featured speaker that evening. He will present an inspiring message about the critical part that native plants play in the health and populations of songbirds, beneficial insects, and pollinators. Homeowners, garden hobbyists and professionals, landscape architects and designers, garden center employees, environmental club members, township employees who design and maintain parks and roadside plantings, etc. are all invited to join us as we learn that we can each make a tremendous difference to the ecosystem and environment by integrating native plants in our landscapes.



From 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., community exhibitors will be set up in the lobby answering questions and passing out information on all facets of environmentally healthy lawn and garden care, including attracting birds and butterflies, composting, rain gardens, native and invasive plants, integrated pest management and much more. Dr. Tallamy will have autographed "Bringing Nature Home" books available for sale.

At 7:30, the program will get underway with a brief introduction of Audubon at Home's new *Bird Habitat Recognition Program* by Steve Saffier of Audubon Pennsylvania, followed by Dr. Tallamy's presentation.

We hope that all of you will join us in promoting this free event that can make a community-wide difference to our songbird population. Invite your friends, your family, and your own landscape professionals. Invite members of other organizations that you belong to. We have a poster that is available to be displayed at your workplace or community bulletin board, as well as postcards that can be sent to you electronically for duplication and distribution. If you would like either of these resources or more information, please contact Lorrie Preston at *Gardens Naturally@aol.com* or 732-5615. Please watch for more information in your April Kingfisher Courier.

This program is made possible through support from *TogetherGreen*, an Audubon program with funding from Toyota; and the Ron Wilson Memorial Fund.

This event is free and open to the public!



Bringing Nature Home A Case for Native Gardening

Dr. Douglas Tallamy
professor, author, and native landscaping expert
of the University of Delaware

Native plants are critical for providing food at just the right time in the life cycles of our songbirds and beneficial pollinators.
Come find out what you can do to help!





save the date!

Thursday, April 16, 2009
Doors & Displays Open at 6:30 p.m.
Pick up helpful info on natural lawn care, attracting birds & butterflies, and more!
Program at 7:30 p.m.

event location
Mechanicsburg Middle School,
1750 S. Market St. (Rte 114)
Mechanicsburg, PA

sponsored by
Appalachian Audubon Society
Mechanicsburg Parks and Recreation Dept.

This program made possible through support from:
TogetherGreen, an Audubon program with funding from Toyota, and the Ron Wilson Memorial Fund

For more information:
GardensNaturally@aol.com 717-732-5615



Mechanicsburg Earth Day Festival

www.mechanicsburgearthdayfestival.com



Saturday, April 25th, 9 am to 7 pm Downtown Mechanicsburg
Parade at 10:00 am – Dress up as a bird, butterfly, turtle, tree, etc. and march!

Sunday, April 26th, 1:30 – 6:30 pm
Trails and Trees Environmental Center, behind Mechanicsburg Middle School
Visit Appalachian Audubon’s Display on Sunday

Organizers are searching for volunteers for Saturday, April 25th, 7 am-noon, noon-5 pm and 5 pm-9 pm. To become a volunteer, please contact (717) 858-6592 or mechanicsburgearthdayfestival@hotmail.com

Upcoming AAS Field Trips



Ned Smith Waterfowl Watch – March 15

Hosted by the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art. This annual waterfowl watch along the Susquehanna River in Millersburg was an annual event for beloved artist and outdoorsman, Ned Smith. Birding experts will be on hand to help identify and count the waterfowl. The event is held from 8 AM to 1 PM. Please dress warmly and bring along your binoculars and spotting scopes. Contact Beth Sanders at the Ned Smith Center at 692-3699 or Judy Bowman at 761-3815 for further information.

Spring Wildflower Walk at Pine Hill Arboretum – April 4

Join Jane Earle for an early spring wildflower walk. Dutchman’s Breeches and other uncommon spring flowers may be seen along this wooded ravine near the Conodoguinet Creek. Contact Jane at 728-4241 or at janeearle7@msn.com.

Join Appalachian Audubon Society AND National Audubon Society

AT THE SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY RATE OF \$20 (\$15 FOR SENIORS AND STUDENTS)

This application is for **NEW** members joining Appalachian and National Audubon for the **FIRST** time (**for members renewing, renewal information will come to you directly from National Audubon**). This introductory offer includes membership in both National and Appalachian Audubon societies, the beautiful *Audubon* magazine, and our own *Kingfisher Courier* newsletter. Please send the form below, with **check** payable to **National Audubon Society**, to: Appalachian Audubon, PO Box 15123, Harrisburg, PA 17105-5123.

New Member’s Name: _____ Today’s Date: _____

Address: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Phone: _____ Senior Membership? (age 62 and up) _____ Student? _____

Is any of this contact information new? If so, place an X here: _____

Please send my Kingfisher Courier newsletter by: (Check one)

_____ E-Mail (Saves funds and resources) OR _____ Paper Copy – U.S. Mail



March 2009

www.appalachianaudubon.org

Appalachian Audubon Society
P.O. Box 15123
Harrisburg, PA 17105-5123

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