

NATURALLY

THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Naturally

NEWSLETTER OF THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

March 2014

Published: September, November, January, March, May Vol. 38, No. 4

Snowy Owls in Franklin County 2013-2014

It is always a beautiful sight to see one of these magnificent birds . . .

By Dale L. Gearhart

The first Snowy Owl in this county was reported in early December sitting on a bale in the field across the road from James Buchanan Middle School. Then on January 9 one was reported along Hissong Road (seen by Joyce Stuff who lives nearby). On January 10 I took this picture of a Snowy Owl along Fristone Road which is near Hissong Road. Since that time many birders and local residents have seen not only one owl, but three Snowy Owls in that general area as recently as early February.

There are unusual numbers of Snowy Owls in Pennsylvania this year at various locations as well as in the northeastern part of our country. Just why so many is unknown for certain but usually it is due to food supplies being difficult to find in Canada and the Arctic region of the far north.

These birds are usually white with barred black/grayish markings on the head and body. The one in the photo is a first year female with



Photo by Dale Gearhart

the dark barrings showing. Males are whiter throughout. These are rather large birds standing about 2 ft. in height and with a wing-span up to 5.5 ft. In snow the owls can be very difficult to see. Most will survive the winter but some do not make it back to the Tundra area.

This is not the first year for the owls to migrate to Franklin County. There have been at least 5 other years that they have been reported and seen here. It always a beautiful sight to see one of these magnificent birds as they rarely make their way into our area.

**GO TO PROJECTSNOWSTORM ONLINE
FOR A FASCINATING LOOK AT TRACKING
SNOWY OWLS THIS WINTER.**

Conococheague Audubon's Annual Meeting

At our annual meeting on January 13 we had a feast with members and guests contributing delectable dishes to share with others. There was plenty of good food and pleasant fellowship for everyone to enjoy! I'd like to thank everyone who showed up for this delightful evening and for the wonderful food items that you brought. Thankfully the weather cooperated too! After our dinner we all thoroughly enjoyed the "feast for our eyes" as we saw the beautiful photos taken by some of our local birders from around here and elsewhere for 2013. We also got to see excellent photos of the Snowy Owl visiting Franklin County in the Hissong Road area in January 2014. We agreed in spirit with the awards given to our current president, Conway Bushey, and to Valerie Barnes, our Christmas Bird Count coordinator. In addition, checks were awarded to the Meadow Grounds Lake project, to Bender's Pond, and to Norlo Park. Thanks again to everyone who made this cold January Monday evening an evening to remember.-- *Terri Kochert*

Gifts & Donations



Three donations and four gifts were presented at the January Annual Meeting. Checks were presented to Greg Cook, Guilford Township Board of Supervisors, for the Norlo Park Foundation; to Dayton Tweedy for the Friends of Meadow Grounds Lake, and to Bryan Bender of Bender's Potato and Produce Barn.



Greg Cook noted that by supporting the Norlo Park Foundation, the Park will be maintained and enjoyed for years to come. The Township generously donated an office in the farm house for Conococheague Audubon and allows the group use of the Community Center for its meetings.



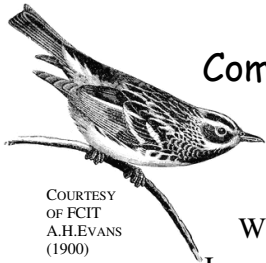
Dayton Tweedy accepted a check for the Friends of Meadow Grounds Lake that was drained due to a leaking dam. The Friends are hoping to collect enough donations to aid in the repair of the dam. Members of Conococheague have enjoyed many years of birding at the Lake.



Bryan Bender spoke on the water filtration system that is being proposed for the pond on their potato farm. The water from the pond irrigates the crops and provides a stopover for many birds. It is a favorite birding spot for Conococheague members.

PRES. CONWAY BUSHEY PRESENTS DONATIONS TO GREG COOK OF GUILFORD TOWNSHIP (TOP); DAYTON TWEEDY OF FRIENDS OF MEADOW GROUNDS LAKE (MIDDLE); AND BRYAN BENDER OF BENDER'S POTATOES. PHOTOS BY DAVID COONEY

Meritorious Awards and a Snavely gift certificate were given to Conway Bushey and David Cooney for their support and leadership in the activities of Conococheague. Thank you gifts were presented to retiring Corresponding Secretary Val Barnes and Dennis McGinnis for all the Bluebird houses he has built. -- *Donna Hocker*



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Come to the April 14 meeting: "Why I Love Warblers" by Rhetta Martin

When I began bird-watching 17 years ago, Jesse Hague would hear the Warblers before we saw them and I realized how important it is to know the bird songs. So I have been studying them and this program should help other birders too. Warblers have such beautiful songs and most of them have really pretty colors, but they are all cute.

*When I bird-watch for Warblers and I find one,
I feel I have found a jewel and it makes my day.*

Nature Film Series

The final nature film *East African Safari* will be presented Thursday, March 6, at Chambersburg Area Middle School South, 1151 E. McKinley St., Chambersburg. Pre-show entertainment starts at 7 p.m. with the film shown at 7:30 p.m. Award-winning filmmaker Rick Ray will take you to several destinations. His website Rick Ray Films promises that "... along the way you will experience the color, excitement, adventure, and romance of one of the most exotic destinations on Earth." This is a fund-raiser for Audubon.



On the Record NEWVILLE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Twelve members of Conococheague Audubon participated in the Newville Christmas Bird Count. Bill Franz reports that a low total species count of 73 was well below the average of 81. Some notable birds were 3 Bald Eagles, 1 Rough-legged Hawk, 116 Turkey Vultures, 8 Red-breasted Nuthatches, 16 Snow Buntings, and 4 Fox Sparrows. -- Donna Hocker



Beginning Birder Workshop Enters Sixth Year

The 2014 Beginning Birder Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, June 7, at 8 a.m. at Caladonia State Park. This will be our sixth year. Participation at last years' workshop was fantastic and again our volunteers have made this event a great success. We can't thank them enough for their help and expertise they bring to our organization. That being said, it's not too early to start planning this year's event and again we need your help. Dave Cooney will chair this function with help from Conway Bushey, and they hope that if you have helped in the past that you would consider volunteering again this year. And of course, we welcome all volunteers. Some of the activities include: Bird Walks, Kid's Corner, Nature Walk, Scavenger Hunt, refreshments, parking visitors, registering participants and assisting with setting up the Visitor Center for the day's activities and events.

If you have any questions or want to volunteer, contact Dave Cooney (264-2116) or e-mail slant1cm@embarqmail.com, or Conway Bushey (262-5659) or e-mail wcbushey@embarqmail.com

-- David Cooney

Special Events Reports Requested

Any Audubon members who have presented any type of program since June 1 (such as talking to a group of seniors, speaking at a civic meeting, etc.) should report the event to the Education-Special Events Committee.

Information reported should include: Title or name of presentation, type of presentation (hike, lecture, Power Point, etc.) date, location, number, and names of members presenting, approximate number of people attending, approximate length of time for the presentation.

Any results from the meeting should also be noted. (Did someone show interest in having another program as a result of the event? Did someone show interest in membership? Did anyone take promotional material or ask for contact information?) Report to:

debbyk@pa.net or dheishma@publicopinionnews.com

-- Debby Heishman

Coming Up - March & April

MEETINGS:

Regular meetings Mondays
Board meetings Thursdays
7 p.m., Community Center, Norlo Park,
3050 Lincoln Way East, Fayetteville, PA

MAR. 10 *Digital Bird Photography* by Dave Cooney

APR. 14 *Why I Love Warblers* by Rhetta Martin

APR.. 24 *Field trip planning 6:30 p.m.;*
Board Meeting 7:30 p.m.

NATURE FILMS

Mar. 6 Nature Film *East African Safari* by Rick Ray
7 p.m. Chbg. Area Middle School South

FIELD TRIPS

PLEASE CONTACT LEADER IN ADVANCE

MAR. 1 MIDDLE CREEK, LANCASTER COUNTY,
AUTO TOUR FOR WATERFOWL
(meet 6:30 a.m. Saturday, Scotland exit I-81)
Dale Gearhart (H) 597-3979 or (C) 860-5799.

MAR. 4 WOODCOCKS
(meet 6 p.m. Tuesday, Chambersburg Mall)
Joan Bowen 264-9493

MAR. 15 YORK COUNTY AUTO TOUR FOR WATERFOWL
(meet 7:30 a.m. Saturday, Rts. 233 & 30)
Conway Bushey 262-5659
Bill Franz 776-4463.

MAR. 29 FRANKLIN-FULTON COUNTIES AUTO TOUR
FOR WATERFOWL (Bender's Pond, Letterkenny
Dam, Cowan's Gap, Fannettsburg Lake)
(meet 9 a.m. Saturday, North Pointe Center)
Doug Powless and **Heather Sahli** 352-3418

APR. 19 LETTERKENNY ARMY DEPOT OR DEPOT
BOUNDARY AREA FOR SPRING MIGRANTS
(meet 7 a.m. Saturday, North Pointe Center)
David Cooney 264-2116

APR. 26 LITTLE COVE FOR SPRING MIGRANTS
(7 a.m. Saturday, Buchanan birthplace, Cove Gap)
Dale Gearhart (H) 597-3979 or (C) 860-5799

WEEDING WORK DAYS:

SATURDAY, APRIL 5 AND WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16
9 A.M. AT NORLO PARK JEAN MORTON 352-3973

Visit the [Conococheague Audubon Website](http://www.conococheagueaudubon.org)
for details and other activities:
www.conococheagueaudubon.org

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