

# NATURALLY

THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Naturally

NEWSLETTER OF THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Nov 2025

Published: September, November, January, March, May Vol. 50, No. 2

## In This Issue:

Page 2 Are You Presidential Material?

Page 3 Thanks for Clean-up

Page 4 -5 Local Christmas Bird Counts

Page 6 Calendar

## President's Corner

by Valerie B Barnes

Temperatures are drifting a little lower in the area, and there are good reports of migrating birds. September 25, 2025 marked a new record night for Cornell Lab of Ornithology's [BirdCast](#). The migration tool recorded more than 1.2 billion birds. Amazing!

Many thanks to Joe and Vanessa Miller for leading a group of 10 who cleaned up a 2-mile stretch of PA Route 997 on Saturday, September 27. Before our first meeting of the year, Ron George and Tracy Snyder helped 10 participants see and identify 10 species of birds around St. Luke's. Maybe we should make that an annual event.



Downy Woodpecker in an apple tree.

Photo credit: Ron George

We are seeking volunteers for several positions: Conservation Chair, Hospitality Chair, President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Please contact [me](#) to offer your services. We need you! If you would like to help take Greencastle-Antrim students on a bird walk at Tayamentasachta on Monday, October 20, please contact Terri Kochert [[terri.kochert81@gmail.com](mailto:terri.kochert81@gmail.com) or 717-263-3692].

Our only October activities are the regular meeting on Monday, October 13 and SOAR Bird Walks on the first and third Saturdays (4 and 18 October). Youth Contest Bird Photos and Lists are due at 6:45 PM at the regular meeting. Members Jeff and Sue Schmaltz will present *5 Years of Birding in our Mobile Home* at 7 PM. At the November 10 meeting, we'll announce youth contest winners and enjoy Kyle Rambo's *Big Year 2024* program. Our regular meetings occur at [St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church](#) (off Route 997, near Scotland exit off I-81) 2695 Luther Dr, Chambersburg, PA 17202. Please join us in person or via Zoom. We welcome everyone.

Thanks to all who have made a donation. If you haven't yet, please send your

President's Corner, continued on page 5



An Eastern Wood-Pewee eyed a Spotted Lanternfly in late August at Furnace Run Park in Southampton Township, Franklin County. The flycatcher made no move to make a meal of the invasive insect.

Photo credit: Jim Hook

## Are You Presidential Material?

by Valerie B. Barnes

The short answer is YES! Any member of Conococheague Audubon is a potential president or vice president. All it takes is a little time and a commitment to the organization and what we are enthusiastic about. We share the National Audubon Society's mission: Audubon protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

Our activities include monthly meetings with nature-oriented programs, ~12 field trips each year, and bird counts. CAS meetings are held the second Monday of each month, September through May, at St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church. Programs for the meetings explore a wide variety of topics related to the interrelationships of plants and animals. Field trips focus on opportunities to observe birds locally year-round and at prime spots in the mid-Atlantic region. The group participates in an annual Christmas Bird Count. At a pot luck supper in January, members share stories, fellowship, and home-made food.

Our projects include supporting local classroom teachers, maintaining and monitoring a Bluebird Trail, conservation projects, an annual workshop for beginning birders, and



*A Red-breasted Nuthatch in mid-September picked seeds from a fir in Cutler, Maine.*

Photo credit; Jim Hook

**You can do it!**  
**We need you!**

sponsoring an annual series of nature films. In 2005 we accepted Guilford Township's offer for us to set up an office in the farm house at Norlo Park near Fayetteville. We planted and continue to maintain a Native Plants garden at Norlo Park.

CAS maintains and distributes a checklist of birds of Franklin County. The *Naturally* newsletter is published five times each year.



*A Black-throated Green Warbler on Oct. 1 passed through the Old Orchard on Heisey Road, Greene Township, Franklin County.*

Photo credit: Jim Hook

As president or vice president, your role is to keep the organization running smoothly. That means you organize and conduct meetings, communicate with members via email, and represent our chapter in regional meetings (usually virtually). You help to enlist others to chair committees and serve on the Board of Directors. You help the leadership team to plan activities for the year, and conduct the annual fundraising drive. You check our email inbox and respond as needed.

What does it take to be president or vice president of Conococheague Audubon? A little time and commitment. You can do it! We need you!

## Thanks for the Clean-up

by Vanessa Miller

On September 27, 2025, ten enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers from Conococheague Audubon assisted Joe and me to clean up a major portion of our adopted highway, Route 997.

Working west from I-81 towards Scotland, we collected 34 large bags of trash for PennDOT. Many thanks for their hard work go to Sue and John Greer, Sharon and Larry Williams, Rhettta Martin, Terri Kochert, Jeff Schmaltz, Taylor Pierre, Jeremy Lambert, and Debby Stitely. Be on the lookout for the next clean-up date in the spring!

**Conococheague Audubon Society**  
PRESENTS A **FREE NATURE FILM**

**“Journey of the Broad-Winged Hawk”**  
A PBS Nature Film



**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2025**  
|| **FILM BEGINS - 7PM** ||  
Chambersburg Area Middle School South  
1151 E. McKinley St.,  
Chambersburg, PA, 17201

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Door Prizes**  
**Donations Welcome!**

Picture credits - David L. Cooney, Jr. | Holly Williamson - Audubon Photography Awards  
(Flying Hawk) (Sitting Hawk)



*Great Horned Owl*

Photo credit: Ron George

# Local Christmas Bird Counts

by Lisa Coombs

**There are two local CBCs: The 4<sup>th</sup> Buchanan Trail Franklin/Fulton Counties CBC is on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 and the 65<sup>th</sup> Chambersburg area Christmas Bird Count is on Saturday, December 20, 2025.**

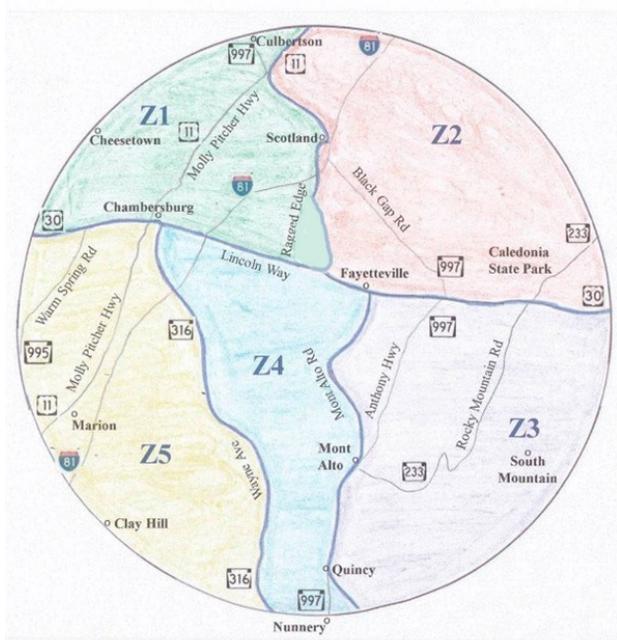
Christmas Bird Counts help Audubon assess the health of bird populations and guide conservation action. You can start counting just after midnight on the count day; owls sometimes sound off in the wee hours of the morning. We need volunteers to count every bird for these projects. Each CBC is conducted in a designated 15-mile diameter circle. Zone Captains / Area Leaders organize volunteers in different sections of the circles.

Lisa Coombs is the compiler for the Chambersburg area CBC; 715-620-2838 or lcoombs58@gmail.com. Vern Gauthier is the compiler for the Buchanan Trail CBC that is in the western part of Franklin County and the eastern part of Fulton County; 717-385-9526, verngauthier14@gmail.com.

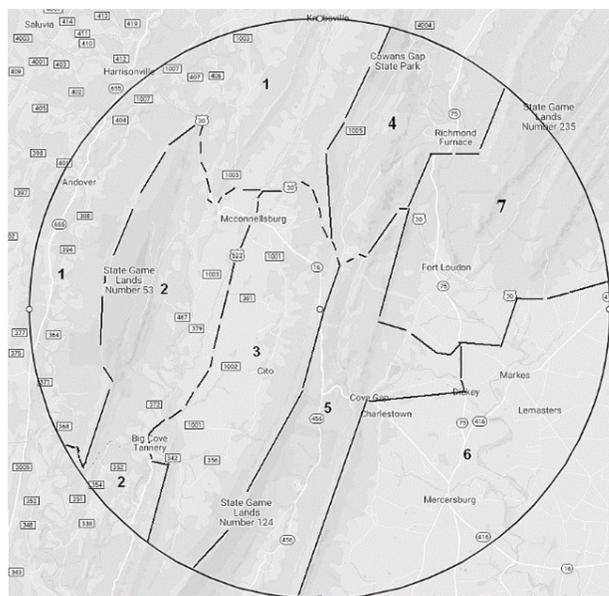


*A young Mockingbird took a break in mid-August from feeding in a field at Pennsylvania State Game Land #169 near Newville.*  
 Photo credit: Jim Hook

If you are new to the count this year or have a new phone number or email address, please contact the compiler. If you live inside the circle and want to start counting birds at your feeders for the first time, contact the compiler. If you've participated before, your Zone Cap-



Chambersburg Area CBC Circle



Buchanan Trail CBC Circle

tain / Area Leader should contact you, probably after Thanksgiving. If he or she doesn't, feel free to contact the compiler and they will help you make the connection.

**December 20, Saturday**  
**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**  
All day, Chambersburg area (PACH).  
**new compiler Lisa Coombs,**  
715-602-2838.

Forms used by observers for the Chambersburg area CBC will be available from the Zone Captains or downloaded from our website, along with a detailed map of the circle. The files will be accessible from the December 20 calendar page for the Chambersburg Area CBC event by late October.



*Red-eyed Vireo*

Photo credit: Ron George

**December 16, Tuesday**  
**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**  
All day, Franklin/Fulton Counties (PABT).  
**Vern Gauthier, 717-385-9526,**  
[verngauthier14@gmail.com](mailto:verngauthier14@gmail.com).

Forms used by observers for the Buchanan Trail Franklin/Fulton CBC will be provided by Vern Gauthier to Area Leaders and Feeder Counters. Vern requests that all new participants contact him by November 26.

Please help! The length of time you count is

up to you. **The Christmas Bird Count is fun, and you never know what you might see.**

Make it a family affair! Note that if the weather forecast calls for really bad weather, we may try to reschedule the count; your Zone Captain / Area Leader will contact you if that happens. Zone Captains / Area Leaders will collect results and provide them to the compiler.

There are two additional Christmas Bird Counts in our area.

- December 22, Monday in the York Springs area. To learn more or to volunteer, please contact the compiler Tim Johnson, 717-409-4805, [tj359@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tj359@sbcglobal.net).
- January 3, Saturday in the Newville Area. To learn more or to volunteer, please contact the compiler Vern Gauthier, 717-385-9526, [verngauthier14@gmail.com](mailto:verngauthier14@gmail.com).

National Audubon asks for donations to support the CBC. If you would like to donate toward the expense of the count, donations may be given to any Zone Captain, Area Leader, compiler, or the treasurer. Please make your check out to CAS and note it is a donation for the CBC; mail to CAS, PO Box 20, Fayetteville, PA 17222.

Audubon appreciates your support.

**President's Corner, continued from page 1**

check to Conococheague Audubon Society, PO Box 20, Fayetteville, PA 17222. Good birding!

**MEETINGS – Free**, held at Fellowship Hall, St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church, 2695 Luther Drive, Chambersburg, PA 17202.

**FIELD TRIPS – Free**, most take place on Saturdays. Contact the leader; arrive early.

**Year-round**

**BIRD WALKS**

SOAR (Studying Ornithology Around the Region) walks, 8:00 AM first and third Saturdays; various locations in Franklin County. Larry and Sharon Williams, 717-655-7414; see <https://buttonwoodnaturecenter.org> for schedule. 717-762-0373

**November 10, Monday**

**MEETING**

7:00 PM Youth Contest Winners announced tonight. *Big Year 2024*, by Kyle Rambo. Arranged by Dave Ebbitt.

**November 13, Thursday at CAMS**

**FILM**

7:00 PM *Journey of the Broad-winged Hawk*, PBS. Depicts the migration of the broad-winged hawk from NH to PA to TX to Ecuador. Door prizes.

**December 8, Monday**

**MEETING**

7:00 PM *Adrenaline Birding Big Month*, by Andy Markel. Arranged by John Carter.

**December 16, Tuesday CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

All day, Franklin/Fulton Counties (PABT). Vern Gauthier, 717-385-9526, [verngauthier14@gmail.com](mailto:verngauthier14@gmail.com).

**December 20, Saturday CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

All day, Chambersburg area (PACH). Lisa Coombs, 715-602-2838.

**December 22, Monday CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

All day, York Springs area. Tim Johnson, 717-409-4805, [tj359@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tj359@sbcglobal.net).

**January 3, 2026, Sat CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

All day, Newville area. Vern Gauthier, 717-385-9526, [verngauthier14@gmail.com](mailto:verngauthier14@gmail.com).

Check our website for updates and maps to all locations:

**CAS WEBSITE:** <https://conococheagueaudubon.org/>

**Newsletter Editor** - Jane Bussard (717-401-3210)  
[janenbussard47@gmail.com](mailto:janenbussard47@gmail.com)

**Send all newsletter articles and photos to the editor.**

**Send all mailing changes to [conaudubon@outlook.com](mailto:conaudubon@outlook.com).**

COPY DEADLINE DECEMBER 15 FOR JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

**CONOCOCHÉAGUE AUDUBON OFFICERS:**

<b>President</b>	Valerie Barnes
<b>Vice President</b>	Lisa Coombs
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Debby Hook
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	Valerie Barnes
<b>Treasurer</b>	Donna Hocker
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	Terri Kochert

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

John Carter, Mike Fagan, Jim Hook, Jeff Schmaltz, Larry Williams, Sharon Williams

---

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Conococheague Audubon  
P.O. Box 20  
Fayetteville, PA 17222

---