

NATURALLY

THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Naturally

NEWSLETTER OF THE CONOCOHEAGUE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Save the Date!

May 4 Spring Migrants
Horse Valley

May 7-9 Migrant Warblers
Magee Marsh, Ohio

May 9 Path Valley

May 10 Lehman Property

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Count

May 13 MEETING – CAS
trip to Community Cloud
Forest Conservation Center,
Guatamala T. Kochert

May 18 & 25 Norlo Park
Garden work days

May 25 Edenville area for
Whip-poor-wills, Bobolinks

June 1 Beginning Birder
Workshop

June 8 Spring Migrants at
Caledonia ...

A Message from the President - Debby Hook

Fallout!

May is an exciting, rewarding month for birders who can't seem to get enough outdoor time searching for spring arrivals. Last year, May 14 was a day of "warbler fallout" in areas of Franklin County. *Fallout* is a term informally used to describe wave after wave of incoming warblers and other migrants into one area, resulting in a torrent of sound and color among the early-leaving trees. Be on the alert; you never know when and where these weary songsters will descend as they eat their way north.

Counting migratory birds

Bill Oyler, the Franklin County coordinator for the Penna. Annual Migration Count, urges members to count birds in the county at any time during the 24-hour period on May 11. There are no assigned areas. Count results are due before May 18 and should include names and numbers of each species observed, number of miles on foot and by vehicle, amount of time you birded, and where you birded. You may report your own check list(s) online at ebird.org, or use count forms available from Bill, which you may email or mail back to him. Contact him now if you wish to participate and to request forms: oylerbill@gmail.com or 717-360-5191; or mail him at 1216 Wilson Ave, Chambersburg, PA 17201.

Saying "Thanks" and "Welcome"

Conococheague Audubon leaders say, "Goodbye, and a big thank you!" to our two outgoing directors, Eric Martin and Earl Nollenberger. We appreciate the time and commitment these dedicated birders have given our chapter the past three years. In their place we welcome Janet Tice, who is returning to a seat on the board; and Ken Higley, a new member who wants to become involved in the work of Audubon. Their term of office will expire at the end of April 2022. "Welcome aboard," Janet and Ken.

Summer Birding for Youth

As we take a summer break from chapter activities, I urge you to listen to a youngster who says, "I'm bored!" Jump at the chance to help a student in pre-K through high school download the FREE Thayer's Birds of North America (version 7.7). It's a sight and sound learning activity with quizzes, flash cards and the capability to create customized bird lists. See details on the new Birding Software page of our website, www.conococheagueaudubon.org.



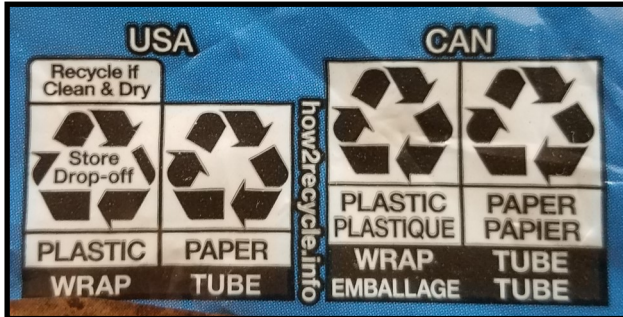
Dickcissel
Photo credit: Dave Cooney Jr.

CONSERVATION – Debby Hook

Recycling is in the Bag

Curbside and municipal recycling took a tough hit in rural America with the loss of many recycled glass markets last fall.

There is hope, though, for plastics recycling with the introduction last year of consumer-friendly identification on types of plastic packaging that, until recently, most recycling stations refused. Thanks to the environmental nonprofit Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC) and its How2Recycle



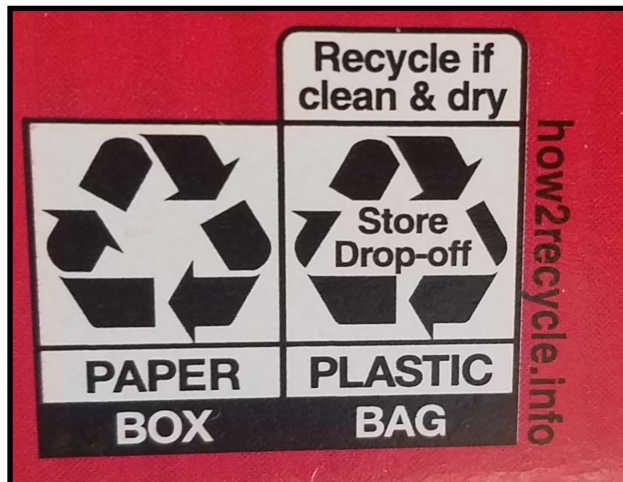
This toilet paper packaging requests a store return for the plastic wrapper and paper recycling for the tubes.

Photo credit: Jim Hook

Label, consumers can recycle with assurance the outer container, the inner wrap, even the lid of a greater number of products.

The How2Recycle Label looks like the familiar triangle we've seen for years. Now, though, there are more explicit instructions. Words such as "Store Drop-off" are clearly written inside each How2Recycle symbol (see photo).

Quite a number of major brands such as Yoplait,



This cracker box's symbols indicate that both the box and the plastic liner inside are recyclable.

Photo credit: Jim Hook

ConAgra Foods, Microsoft, Kimberly-Clark and Seventh Generation have joined SPC. Wholesale stores such as BJ's and Costco are also on board, as are Target, Staples and Walmart, which have convenient recycling stations in their stores.

Now we can recycle with confidence by returning these kinds of plastics to grocery and department store drop-off bins: retail, carryout, produce, newspaper, bread, and dry cleaning bags; zip-top food storage bags; plastic shipping envelopes (remove labels), bubble wrap and air pillows (deflate); product wrap on cases of water/soda bottles, paper towels, napkins, disposable cups, bathroom tissue, diapers, and female sanitary products; furniture and electronics wrap; plastic cracker and cereal box liners, as long as they don't tear like paper; and any film packaging or bag that has the new How2Recycle Label. Remember to recycle only CLEAN and DRY plastic bags and film and remove paper, staples, stickers and other items from bags.

DO NOT RECYCLE: Degradable or compostable bags or film packaging; pre-washed salad mix bags, frozen food bags (unless indicated), candy bar wrappers; chip bags, six-pack rings, cellophane or cling wrap.

For more information, visit the GreenBlue website <https://greenblue.org/> and the How2Recycle website <https://www.how2recycle.info/>.



Black and White Warbler

Photo credit: Bob Keener

Bird Behavior — Val Barnes

As we enjoy the return of birds that breed in our area, one of the most distinctive songs comes from the Eastern (formerly Rufous-sided) Towhee. When you hear “drink your tea” with a long-drawn -out emphasis on “tea,” you immediately picture a large sparrow with a chunky body and bill and a long tail. The male has black on its upperparts, throat, and head. His sides are rufous, and his belly is white. The corners of his tail are white. The female is similar, except that she has brown where the male has black.

These towhees are fun to watch as they rustle amidst leaf litter on the ground. They do the typi-



Eastern Towhee male
Photo credit— Dave Cooney, Jr

cal sparrow scratch-hop to uncover seeds, fruits, insects, spiders, millipedes, centipedes and snails.

Males establish territories upon arrival in the spring. During this period, we often hear both the “drink your tea” call and the shorter “chewink” call.

Towhees nest on or near the ground. Their nest cup is about four inches wide, and is usually made of bark strips, twigs, dead leaves and leaf stems. A smaller interior cup is lined with fine dry grasses or animal hair. Females are largely responsible for the nest and brooding. Males help to feed the young. To find a nest, watch the female in early to mid-spring. If she is upset with you, you may be near her nest.

To learn more about Eastern Towhees, visit https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Towhee/overview or Donald & Lillian Stokes, [A Guide to Bird Behavior, Volume II](#). May we all have the chance to enjoy these vocal and colorful summer residents!

Bird-Related Sayings Val Barnes

“Birds of a feather flock together”

The meaning for this one seems straight-forward: Those with similar characters, tastes, or interests congregate or associate in groups. According to <https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/>, William Turner used a version of this phrase in his 1545 papist satire [The Rescuing of Romish Fox](#): “Byres of on kynde and color flok and flye all-ways together.”

The phrase appears in Benjamin Jowett's 1856 translation of Plato's [Republic](#): “Men of my age flock together; we are birds of a feather, as the old proverb says.” If the translation is accurate, then the phrase originated ~380 BC. Another very early similar reference is [The Apocrypha, The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus 13:16](#): “All flesh consorteth according to kind, and a man will cleave to his like.” And we find in Homer's [The Iliad, XVII, l. 218](#): “God always pairs off like with like.”

Some bird species do form flocks. European Starlings, Common Grackles, Red-winged Blackbirds, Brown Cowbirds, many ducks, geese, and other waterfowl often amass in large flocks, especially during migration or winter. Why? The birds probably do so to avoid predators, to share warmth, and because they have found a good source of food. Birds that fly in large flocks may also save energy because of the uplift draft created by their neighbors.

Some birds, such as grouse, form leks that increase the likelihood of mating. Multiple males display to the females on the lekking grounds to improve their success. Flamingos, Birds-of-Paradise, and Manakins also “use leks or other flocking behavior as part of breeding courtship.” <https://www.thespruce.com/what-does-a-flock-of-birds-mean-386452>

Rookeries of egrets, herons, and other shorebirds are communal nurseries to raise young. While parents tend their own nests, it helps to have neighbors to look out for youngsters when predators enter the area.

For humans, associating with other people provides mutual protection, socialization, companionship, a chance to exchange ideas, ... When the association includes a sense of commitment, a lifelong bond may form. We all need friends.

Let's flock!

On the Record — Donna Hocker

BLACKWATER NWR FIELD TRIP

Two birders braved the weather and birded Blackwater NWR, Memorial Lake, Eastern Neck and the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center in February. Marion and Bob Carmack added two birds to the list: Wild Turkey and Common Goldeneye. They saw 56 species, bringing the total number on this trip to 133 birds.

MIDDLE CREEK WMA FIELD TRIP

Rhetta and Eric Martin led five observers to the partly frozen waters at Middle Creek, Memorial Lake and Wildwood Lake in March. They saw a total of 47 species, adding the Brown Creeper to the list that now totals 107. The Golden-crowned Kinglet was seen for the first time since 1997.

WOODCOCK FIELD TRIP



Black-throated Blue Warbler that survived window strike and flew away after a little rest

Photo credit: Bob Keener

Jim and Debby Hook led 6 birders to Heisey Road Orchard to see and hear Woodcocks in March. Three Woodcocks were heard and two buzzed the group. The Woodcocks could be heard spiraling up and falling. A total of 8 species were seen or heard.

The **LETTERKENNY** trip scheduled for April 13 was canceled.



Young Cape May Warbler

Photo Credit: Dave Cooney, Jr.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

All Saturdays in May **BIRDING FOR MIGRANTS**

Bird walks will take place every Saturday in May at Renfrew Park, 1010 E. Main St., Waynesboro. Meet at 7:30 AM in the lower parking lot off Welty Road. For details, call Larry and Sharon Williams, 717-655-7414; or Renfrew Institute, 717-762-0373.

May 4, Saturday **FIELD TRIP**

6:30 AM. Horse Valley for SPRING MIGRANTS. Meet at North Pointe Center, US 11 north of Chambersburg. Bring scopes, binoculars, CBs and lunch. **Kathy Lauver (New contact)** 717-264-0435; or **Donna Hocker**, 717-401-0604.

May 7-9, Tues.-Thurs. **FIELD TRIP**

6 AM, Meet Burger King, 2194 LWW. Magee Marsh, Ohio, for WARBLER MIGRANTS. Bring scopes, binoculars, CBs, and lunch. Make own motel arrangements. Sign up by March 1, 2019. **Bob and Terri Kochert**, 717-263-3692.

May 9, Thursday **FIELD TRIP**

6:30 AM. Path Valley for SPRING MIGRANTS. Leave from Keener's home, 5207 Heisey Road. Bring scopes, binoculars, CBs, and lunch. **Bob Keener**, 717-532-9723 or 717-658-8765.

May 10, Friday **FIELD TRIP**

6:00 PM. Lehman property for SPRING MIGRANTS. Meet at 750 Tallow Hill Road, Chambersburg, to walk around pond, meadows and woods. **Larry Lehman**, 717-263-7203.

May 11, Saturday **MIGRATORY BIRD COUNT**

All day. Pennsylvania Annual Migration Count. For tally form and details, contact **Bill Oyler**, oyler-bill@gmail.com or 717-360-5191.

May 13, Monday **MEETING**

7:00 PM. *Our 2018 CAS Trip to Community Cloud Forest Conservation Center (CCFC), Guatemala*, by Terri Kochert.

Continued on page 6.

Tribute to Dorothy Thomas — Debby Hook

Family and friends of long-time Conococheague Audubon member Dorothy Thomas mourned her passing and celebrated her life at a memorial service April 6 in Chambersburg.

A woman of many interests and a passion for her family, Dorothy, who died March 25 at the age of 94, was a vibrant participant in Audubon programs and activities until suffering a stroke last fall.

Dorothy was CAS President from 1991 to 1993. During that two-year period, her president's column in *Naturally* was titled "Dot's Jots." She was a dedicated, meticulous leader, said Joan Bowen.

When the late Mildred Bender stepped down in 1995 as Bluebird Trail coordinator, Dorothy capably filled the position until 2009. Even after she ended her official duties, Dorothy kept a bucket of nest box-handling supplies, tools and record sheets on a table in the sunny, enclosed porch of her Penn Hall cottage, within easy reach of the weekly record-keepers.

Diminutive and quiet, she could easily have been overlooked among a crowd at chapter gatherings – except when she looked at you with those startlingly clear, determined eyes. She will be missed.

Annual Report — Debby Hook

The 2018-2019 year was a busy, productive time for our chapter. This year, we had an income of \$8,004.79, with paid expenses of \$4,783.03 and outstanding bills totaling just over \$1,600. We received a grant from PA Audubon for \$550 and local sponsorships of \$500 toward the interpretive sign we have ordered from Hopewell Manufacturing Inc., Waynesboro. The sign could be installed as early as next month, according to committee chairman Terri Kochert.

National Audubon has assigned 339 members to our chapter and we have 19 local-only members. Since September, members have taken six field trips, with seven more to go in May and June. We hosted our 10th Beginning Birder Workshop, participated in the Christmas Bird Count and anticipate the PA Annual Migration Count in May. There were nine opportunities for outreach, including indoor presentations and outdoor displays. We also presented three free nature films to the public and provided 41 Audubon Adventures in the Classroom packets to four area schools.

For the second year, a group of adjudicated youth at Abraxas helped Josh Donaldson mulch our native garden. The Bluebird Trail suffered statistically due to a wet summer that resulted in unmown, low-lying fields where nearly a dozen nest boxes are located. A plethora of ticks in the past several years makes entering these fields a health hazard.

A full report from officers, directors and committee chairs is on record and available to members upon request.

Two New Scholarships Available This Summer -Terri Kochert

Both Wilson College (through its week-long S.E.E.D.S. program) and Shippensburg University's two weeks of Chemistry Club offer summer camp opportunities for area youth to explore our natural environment and the world. This year, Conococheague Audubon Society will introduce a class in "Caring for Our Backyard Birds" at each camp. Terri Kochert will present an hour-long program at Wilson and an hour and a half at Shippensburg University, with dates yet to be announced.

Two students desiring financial help will be selected by their teachers to receive one of two scholarships to the camps. At the camps, CAS will introduce youngsters to the beauty of nature, caring for birds, and the fun and excitement of looking at birds. We'll use Thayer Birding Software's Bird Recognition visual and auditory "quiz." We'll also give a short PowerPoint program on how to care for birds. We'll measure each student's "wingspan" with CAS's wingspan banner and take an outside excursion to look for birds using our CAS binoculars. The challenge will be to spot a variety of birds during the hot summer months.

This is one more way to encourage our youth to become engaged in and to take responsibility for nature around them. Thank you all for your donations to CAS in this new adventure that avails such important learning opportunities to our young people. Interested, compassionate nature lovers such as you can impact the future wellness of our environment.

For camp details, visit <http://www.ship.edu/camps/> or <https://www.wilson.edu/seeds-summer-camp>.

MEETINGS – Free, held in the Community Center at Norlo Park, 3050 Lincoln Way East, Fayetteville.

FIELD TRIPS – Free, most take place on Saturdays. Contact the leader in advance if you plan to go. Times listed are departure times; please arrive early. If you cannot go on a scheduled trip, contact leader for a potential mid-week option on his/her scouting trip.

FILMS – Free, all begin at 7:30 PM in Chambersburg Area Middle School South, 1151 E. McKinley St., Chambersburg, PA. Pre-show musical entertainment begins at 7 PM.

Future Events, continued from page 4.

May 18, Saturday **WORK DAY**
9:00 AM. Work at NORLO PARK native garden. **Josh Donaldson**, 717-264-6920.

May 25, Saturday **WORK DAY**
9:00 AM. Work at NORLO PARK native garden. **Josh Donaldson**, 717-264-6920.

May 25, Saturday **FIELD TRIP**
5:30 PM. Edenville area for WHIP-POOR-WILLS and BOBOLINKS. Leave from Sunnyway Foods parking lot, 49 Warm Spring Road, Chambersburg. Bring scopes, binoculars, and CBs. **Eric and Rhetta Martin**, 717-597-8675.

June 1, Saturday **WORKSHOP**
7:45 AM. Beginner Birding Workshop. Meet at Visitors' Center in Caledonia State Park, Fayetteville; park in first parking lot beyond Visitors' Center. **Dave Cooney, Jr.** 717-264-2116.

June 8, Saturday **FIELD TRIP**
7:00 AM. South Mountain/Caledonia/Michaux IBA for SPRING MIGRANTS. Leave from second parking lot beyond Visitors' Center in Caledonia State Park. Bring scopes, binoculars, and CBs. **Eric and Rhetta Martin**, 717-597-8675.

June 15, Saturday **FIELD TRIP**
7:30 AM, *tentatively* at Menno Haven Brookside's Creekside Nature Trail. Bring binoculars and field guide. Dress for wet grass conditions. **Dave Cooney, Jr.** 717-264-2116.

CAS WEBSITE: www.conococheagueaudubon.org

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Send all newsletter articles and photos to the editor.
Send all mailing changes to conaudubon@outlook.com.

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Recording Secretary	Rhetta Martin
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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